

*The Architectural Review*

*Vol 98 — July 1945*

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# The Architectural Review

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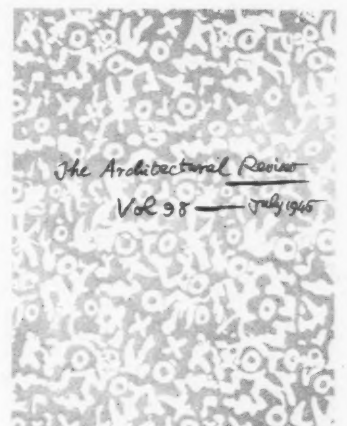
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THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

**THE COVER.** Four pages of this issue are devoted to the Wallpaper Exhibition recently held in London. One of its major sections consisted of designs for post-War wallpapers and several of these were by Graham Sutherland. This month's cover is a full size reproduction of one of his designs—a pattern which combines the strange animation of root or cartilage forms with the pleasant liveliness of traditional all-over designs. It is good to see that we can have busy, unostentatious, small-scale pattern without having to rely entirely on the chintzy flora of the past. The colouring on the cover is one of several suggested by the artist and shown at the exhibition.









## FORBIDDEN CITY

AN ADVENTURE IN ARCHITECTURAL IMPRESSIONISM

By Edward Lewis

FROM childhood the notice "*Trespassers will be Prosecuted*" has had for me a stimulating if occasionally sinister fascination. Let the landlords sneer. Were it not for that inviting warning there would be many fine buildings and refreshing gardens which I should never have troubled to investigate. But I was always conscious, while opening closed doors and escaping murderous owners, that the climax was still to come. So it was with a feeling of the ordained that on entering the mess tent one morning I beheld the following prohibition pinned to the Adjutant's blackboard: "*G.H.Q. Palforce, Baghdad. All ranks to note. Owing to the disturbances resulting from the Rashid Ali incident, it is necessary to remind all units that the town of Najaf is strictly out of bounds.*" Troubles of this kind were not uncommon at the time, but there were some special and understandable reasons for making Najaf into a Forbidden City. Not only is it a sacred place of importance in the Mohammedan world, but also, amongst its inhabitants are said to be some remnants of the Assassins, one of the most fanatical of the old Shiah sects of Islam, and in the city's black past strangers of different faiths have sometimes received ill treatment at their inhospitable hands. During the last war, a Christian political officer was murdered there, and a section of Colonel Wilson's force, stationed nearby, narrowly escaped massacre. The incident may have been due to some isolated and individual piece of tactlessness, for I remembered that since then British soldiers and other European visitors to the famous Tomb were known to have received a much more tolerant reception than some other sects, themselves Moslems, notably the hated Sunnis, age old rivals of the Shiahs in the main divisions of the Prophet. I had hardly therefore finished reading the unusually stimulating officialese of the warning notice before my arrangements for visiting the Forbidden City, partly from sheer force of trespassing habit, were already complete in my mind. To put the finishing touches to them, I consulted Abud Khadem, my foreman bricklayer, and a man of discretion. To my surprise, Abud seemed curiously unwilling to discuss the subject of the Forbidden City, and was only prevailed upon to do so under friendly pressure. I then noticed that he used the Arabic personal pronoun "*huya*," alluding to Najaf as "*he*," as though the city were some strange kind of being. I found this anthropomorphic attitude not without interest, and it certainly did not lessen my curiosity or my resolve to see this particular piece of trespassing through to the end.

The personality, or as we usually prefer to call it, the character of cities, is a human subject which has still not received all the attention which it deserves. We think we can afford to take Abud's attitude with a smile, while admitting that there may be some understandable everyday causes which gave rise to it. But this kind of personification is not altogether unknown even to ourselves, particularly in literature. Seaside lodging houses, for instance, have been convincingly described as "*flat chested*." We have also actually spoken, not only during the blitz, of "*the spirit*" of great towns. Are these mere phrases, or do we sometimes, without knowing it, give more credence to them than as serious students we would care to admit? Since we wear our houses and our cities like clothes, is it really so inconceivable that in some fantastic and special circumstances of psychology, setting, and design, the individual personalities within them, once rich and warm, might fade into a collective mask, or even completely vanish, like the bones and flesh of an invisible Superman, leaving the external vestments to strut about by themselves? That moment, in our excited imagination, would be the one in which the city itself took on its own personality, living and distinct, to amble through the green countryside with friendly, seven league slippers, or with big black boots to stalk and terrorise, like Najaf, the distant city of the desert. We Westerners think we can approach such manifestations of urban personality with calmness and detachment. We pride ourselves on being able to

analyse the nature of their influences, the causes which created and maintained them, and the technical and æsthetic means by which they were brought about. The poor Shiah Arab, we declare, has none of these advantages. He must propitiate his awful city until time or revolution or both cleanse the system of which it is a part; only then will its supposed self, so real and so evil in his childlike eyes, pass from it as a nightmare, and the city of reality, calm and serene in the morning, be left, objectively, for study and delight. But I doubt whether Europeans are in fact so different from the Shiahs. Can we, where they are infected, ourselves remain immune? That was the question which I asked myself, and which I was to put to the test, as I first gazed on Najaf, from a distance of nearly fifty miles, across the deadness of the sand.

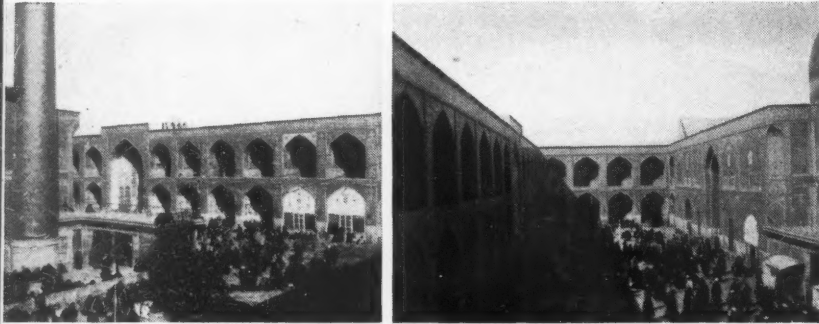
There was no doubt, I tried to argue, that the influence of fear which so palpably emanated from Najaf, even from such a distance, and which is felt no less by the European than by the Arab, must be due in the first place, not to the undefined nor to preconceptions arising from historical gossip or the tales of travellers, but entirely to the weird nature of the approaches, weird enough even for that land of grimness and desert. From Karbala, the last outpost of civilisation proper, the pilgrim track sweeps onwards into nowhere. Hour after hour, across the maddening flatness, the lorry sways and jolts. The silver light glare shifts and shimmers through a golden pepper of sand clouds raised by the wheels and the wind. Water mirages smile and mock. The appalling infinitude of space in its bare elements, unmoulded and uncompresssed, surround our microscopic selves. The immediate scene never changes. Yet the lorry, with its tail of sand, is evidently moving. It has become a comet in a sandy universe. Mr. Ford, in cosmic mood. We laugh, and as we laugh, a single vivid flash, infinitely far away, on the uttermost edge of the flatness, like some semaphore of Allah, proclaims the Golden Dome of Ali, the sign of the Forbidden City. Now time no longer drags. It speeds. At last there is a fixed point by which to check movement. Soon we can make out the strange and solitary hillock of dark rock on which the great building stands. From afar, it seems to be drawing us towards it, irresistibly, hypnotically. The tall and glittering minarets are beckoning fingers of brass which will suddenly curve downwards and clutch our tiny-body into themselves.

Struggling to keep such absurd impressions within reasonable bounds, I tried, coldly, to consider how illuminating it might be to make a special study, from the subjective viewpoint, of the whole question of approaches, as distinct from actual settings, on the judgment of the æsthetic effect of cities in general. My thoughts returned home and I recalled how once, after a long voyage up the Thames in spring time, past tree banks in the sunlight flashing and green, we had come suddenly on red brick Maidenhead, and a friend in the boat, exclaiming with delight, had held forth upon the æsthetic qualities of the old town in terms which at the time seemed to me wildly exaggerated. I also remembered a twenty mile drive across the primeval Westmorland fells, with an unexpected descent into the snugness of Kendal, and being persuaded, for at least five minutes, that the very second rate spec. builder's stone housing of 1750 was better than the best of Bedford Square. Again, I could not help wondering whether, if we had not driven into Lewes through those long perspectives of Sussex downland, we should have thought so well of the old fortress when we reached it, or if, as holiday students, we had not flowed out to Siemenstadt along the silver, southbound Autobahn, we should have rated even that immense achievement of Gropius as highly as we did? It is problematical, but this at least is certain, to digress for an instant to the topical, that as it is the clear function of the secular or prefabricated dwelling to supply as much "*commodity, firmness, and delight*" to the square inch as is humanly possible, so it is of the religious centre

to create the appropriate atmosphere, whether of detachment, exaltation, or terror. Najaf, which fulfils the latter function with a gruesome success, is the Terror City par excellence.

Terror, yes! With slow and dragging steps, the various architectonic elements, arranged and designed with such unscrupulous purpose but sensitive understanding by those old architect priests, crawl upwards, as on a scaffold, to their irrevocable climax.

At the bottom of the staircase come the Toulk-Al-Mowt, Belt of Death, the countless tombs and graves of centuries of pilgrims, grey haired men and women from Baghdad, Mosul, or Basra, from furthest Persia, India, or Africa, who in a last act of submission have dragged their dying bodies across the waste of sand to share their final resting places with the Venerated and Feared. Very slowly, like a hearse, we drive through the vast cemetery. There is no set road, we have to thread our way among the mounds and stones as among littered skeletons, sometimes conscious, amid the oppressive silence, of a black



clad figure flitting from tomb to tomb, or peering at us angrily through cracks in the walls of dirty yellow mud. Abud the Sunni, apprehensive not only of the intangible dangers, warns me not to spend too long on my inspection, nor to linger at the holy places so as to attract a crowd. But there is no time for talking. Already we are at the base of the rock. It towers above us like some devil's Gibraltar. An opening appears, and grinding into bottom gear we climb, the groaning engine echoing from the sides of the cutting. The first crest is reached. A jumble of mud hovels, filthy, windowless, and blank, confronts us. They speckle the black walls which now bar the lorry completely. We stop and get out. At first there seems to be no further way up, even on foot. But then, among the crumbling dwellings, we see some slits. They lead to alleyways, tunnelled and stenching through the mud caves and cliffs, upwards towards a pinpoint of brilliant light which must be the building we have come so far to visit. Slowly, and somewhat painfully, we clamber and toil to its foot. Suddenly, out into the blinding glare!

Aesthetically, and from close at hand, first impressions of the great Shrine are completely satisfying. And this is as it should be. For the longer the introduction, the firmer must be the statement, the more solid the climax. Preparation cannot exist for its own sake, or it becomes meaningless and perverted. It must make way for something larger than itself. It must whet the appetite, or tremble the nerves. If the emotional effect takes the form of desire, then desire must not merely be satisfied, but expectation exceeded. And if fear is aroused, its culmination must be terror. All these principles the unknown architect obviously understood, and was able in his own dark yet brilliant way to apply.

If the desert is the strategic preparation for the climax of Najaf, the actual layout of the Mosque is the tactical one. The immediate basis of it is a kind of market place in which we now find ourselves, a gash in the place's wrinkled body. The scene lacks the usual vivacity of Oriental bargaining, for the black clad Shiah are forbidden to smile or to feel any of the joys of living. They pluck furtively at the goods, mumble in unintelligible dialect. But the human scene, if human it can be called, is dominated by the Portal of the Mosque, gaping above the hooded figures like a hungry mouth. Yet the huge opening, sensuous yet stern, with its thin but brilliant line of blood-red mosaic, is dwarfed by the fortress face in which it is set. Massive and mountainous blocks linked with precision joints; laboured from distant quarries by the old Shiah masons; white and shining like the icy robes of the impassive priests who stand on guard. Beyond their statuesque figures the immense forecourt, a wide space of freedom against the fettered huddle of alleyways and hovels, opens out like the sudden swish of a fan in a closed and airless room. Crouched in many attitudes upon its stone flagged chessboard of pink and white, are the multitudes of the Faithful, dinning the air with the hum of their prayers and imprecations, and in supplication extending their massed arms towards the menacing inner Shrine itself.

Most of the great sacred buildings of the East make use of the spatial preparations and excitements of contrasting forecourts, corridors, and colonnades. They are elements which suit the climates and frame the climaxes. I have not, however, visited more than a few of them, nor seen, except in books, the noble temple enclosures of the Buddha. But I should be surprised, even so, if there were many rivals to the supreme tragedy and simplicity of Najaf. The colossal, merciless prison square of courtyard and column, unyielding in its line and rhythm; the hard desert flatness of the stones themselves, which by contrast throw up the central verticality of the inner building in a fountain of pillars climbing to fantastic pointed arches, only to break and fall again in a spray of pendant vaultings of brass, hanging silver chains, and innumerable drops of diamond glass, white, emerald, and ruby, into the splashed chalices of glowing oil lamps which light for Ali the solemn entrance and inner darkness of his tomb. Out to the wide spaces of the great forecourt, and those four lofty minarets, now seeming to watch over the inner sanctity like stiff and slender sentinels. Back to that tiny doorway to the tomb, and from it for the last time upwards, in a funereal crescendo of scale, black and crouching figures, small opening, sinuous pillars, twisting pendentives, curling arches, to the satanic pinnacle of Shiah and Islam, the jet black crescent which surmounts the Dome.

The Golden Dome of Najaf, one of the seven wonders of the Arabic world, and surely of all the world, exerts over the layout and the mass a grim and absolute domination. It is not only by far the largest single element in the whole plan, but is in itself almost as large as all the many smaller individual and surrounding blocks placed and pressed together. In very size, greater than many domes more famous, it expresses the unwavering belief of the Shiah in the divinity and supreme power of the Caliph Ali and his successors, with their ability and right, not only to foretell the future and guide the present in the paths of punishment and fear, but also to interpret the will of Allah in terms of an absolute and extreme stoicism. Through the centuries the Shiahs, shrinking in numbers but always held together as an intact sect by a ruthless theocracy, have walled themselves within an hereditary and mounting hatred of the outside world, and particularly of that Moslem majority which originally rejected and still rejects their interpretation of the Prophet's teaching. This stoicism, this priesthood, and this splendid if terrible Shrine, the palace not only of the dead Ali but also of his living-dead descendants, was, in effect, to atone for all that was squalid, brutal, or poverty-stricken in the ordinary life of the world. Jewels within, mud without. But however repellent the social picture which Najaf presents, its holy building crowned by this gigantic dome, is not merely aesthetically, but also morally and psychologically, admirable and triumphant. Did the Shiahs ever feel any temptation to stray from the stony path, there was this great round eye of Ali, watching them and seeking them out, even in the darkest and deepest of their alleyways. It is necessary to emphasise this Dome's extraordinary and many sided dominance because there is no other which I have ever seen or could imagine which might approach, much less challenge it, in its beauty and its power. Beside it, domes so interesting in themselves as those of Peter, Paul, and Mark, would be the merest inert lumps. But this sublime yet devilish structure possesses, for all its eternal qualities of repose, an instantaneous life and vitality of its own, a vitality which in the estimation of the dreading and worshipping Shiahs, personifies the stern spirit of the Venerated and Feared whose remains it enshrouds. This effect of personality, so obvious and so unarguable to the spectator, is perhaps more capable than any other feature of the Forbidden City of direct aesthetic analysis. It is due, of course, to its vibrant qualities of form; here is a living shape which has not just been set out mechanically with a compass, nor worked according to some formula of curves carefully combined, neither is it even a sensitive piece of modelling by some exceptionally gifted artisan proceeding on a basis of trial and error. It is none of these things. The Great Golden Dome of the Shrine of Ali is in the most true and most complete sense a piece of sculpture, worthy to be ranked by the side of, or even perhaps above, the Pharaoh gods of Egypt, Michelangelo's David, Epstein's Genesis, or Mestrovic's Bishop of Split. It is useless merely to describe the shape of it; the dagger-like subtlety of the slight outward curve from its base, the strong and crescendo swelling, the fierce vigour of the main bulge, the imperceptible diminishings above, or the feline grace of the final curving in and tapering at the summit; it would be just as trivial to dwell, with measurement and computation, important and interesting as it would be, on the dome's huge volume, immensely greater than the base on which it stands, or on the hard and yellow richness of the golden bricks with which its surface is finished, in this climate and setting as impressive and inevitable as elsewhere they would be impossible and vulgar. All these things are details. What is essential is the supreme genius which has inspired into the whole, into the all-seeing eye of Ali, that flashing and profound quality of personality, Ali's personality, beautiful sometimes but always implacable, to reach out and dominate from afar the Faithful, and yes, the faithless too, with his unrelenting message.



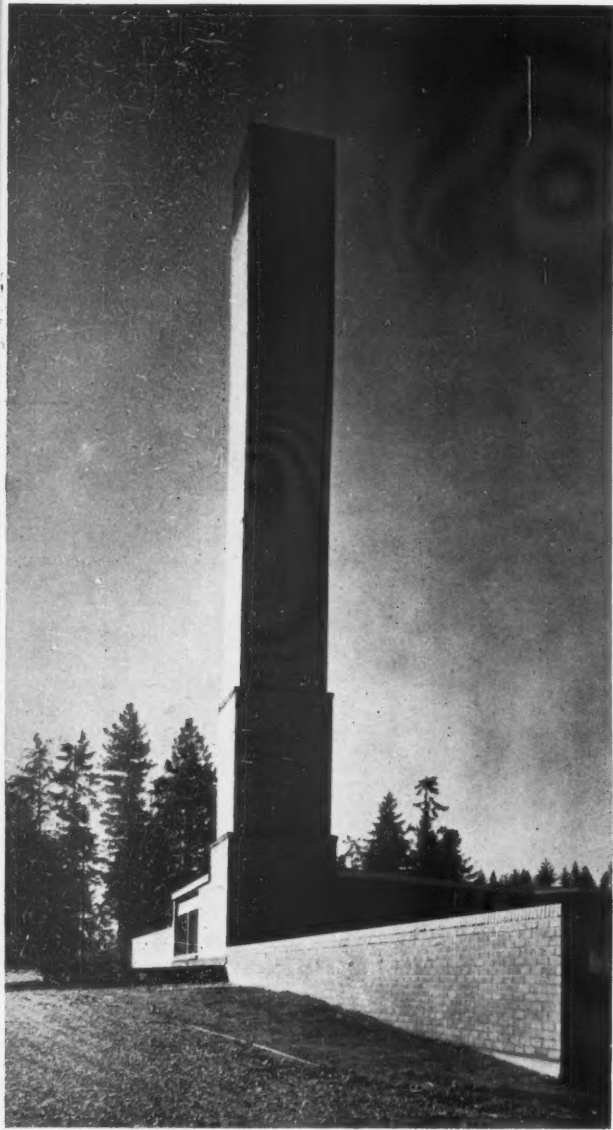


## HOSPITAL AT BREMERTON, WASHINGTON

Bremerton in the State of Washington in the far north-west corner of the United States is one of the many thriving American war communities. It had a population of 13,000 in 1939, of 75,000 in 1944. The hospital here illustrated was designed by the architects responsible for the whole garden estate or garden city scheme and also for all other social buildings, community centres, schools, fire stations, post offices, shopping centres, etc. The hospital was originally planned to have six storeys. The ban on structural steel led to the decision to build on the pavilion principle. Each nursing pavilion has 26-34 beds and a covered staircase at its end. 1.

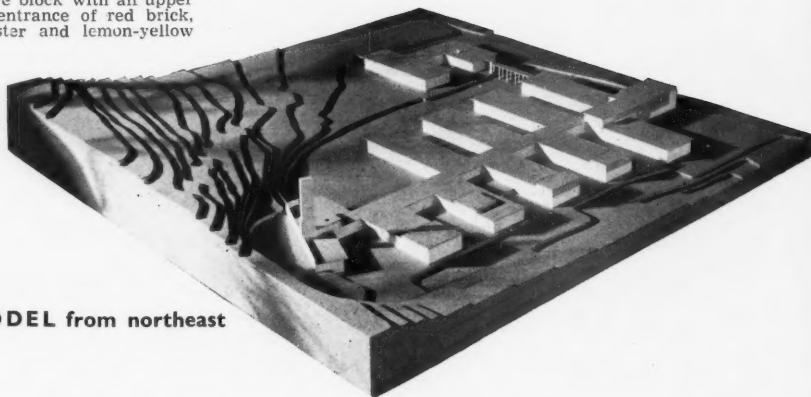


**F. A. Naramore, Grainger, Brady and Johanson**



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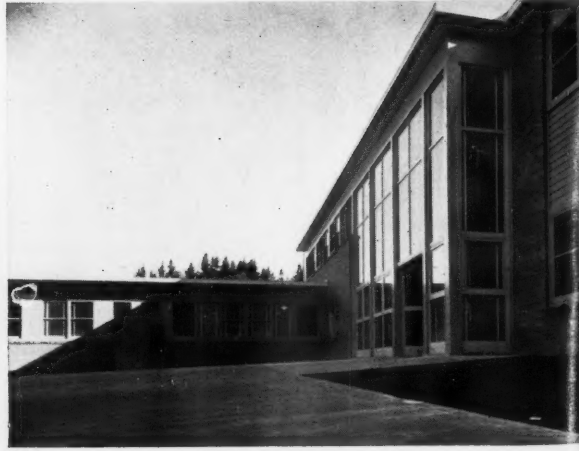
The plan leads from the administration block, **7**, in the north-west, at right angles to the meeting place of medical wing and health centre, via the obstetrical and surgical wings, towards kitchen, laundry and boiler house, **3** and **6** in the east. The Nurses' Home is a separate building in the south-west, **5**, connected with the main group by a covered passage. Its architecture is almost identical with that of the hospital pavilions. The only accent is the administrative block with an upper storey and a tall entrance of red brick, sand coloured plaster and lemon-yellow soffits.



MODEL from northeast



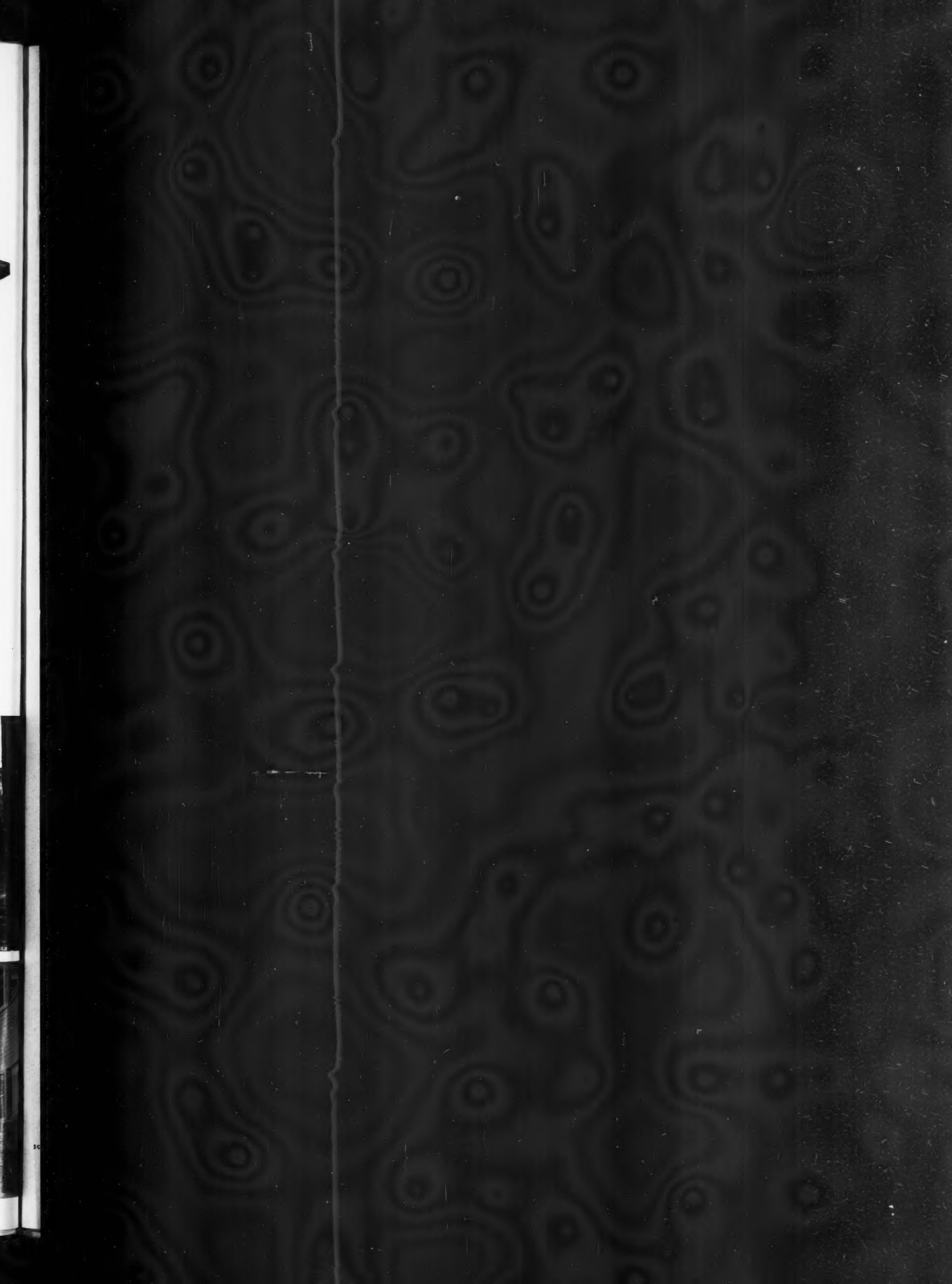
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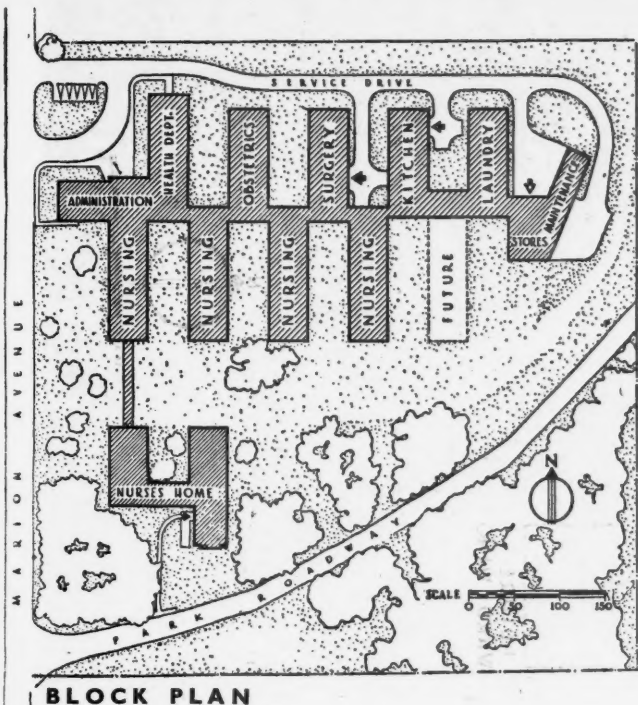


BL

UNION COOK







BLOCK PLAN

**GENERAL**—Bremerton, in the State of Washington, close to the Pacific coast of the United States and close to the Canadian border, is one of those war-time communities so typical of present-day America. It had a population of 13,000 in 1939. Five years later the population had gone up to 75,000. There had been a Naval Yard at Bremerton before the war, and the little dockyard town was surrounded by densely wooded hilly country. The architects had to open up forest areas and provide about 6,000 houses. An impression of the layout is given on page 38 of our August, 1944 number on American war-time housing. The architects of the estate were also commissioned to design public buildings such as fire stations, playgrounds and public gardens, post offices, schools, shopping centres and also the hospital here illustrated. The bodies responsible for this were the City of Bremerton and the Kitsap County Health Department. It serves the two-fold function of municipal hospital and health centre. It has at present 106 beds, but can, should emergency make it necessary, house 130. Before its erection there were only 153 beds available for the whole area, that is 1.4 beds per thousand population. This figure has now been increased to the more reasonable one of 2.35 or even 2.57. The exact purpose of the hospital was defined by the architects in close consultation with the United States Department of Public Health and the Public Buildings Administration. Special emphasis is laid on the fact that hospital and health centre facilities are available to private practitioners as well as hospital and health centre staff.

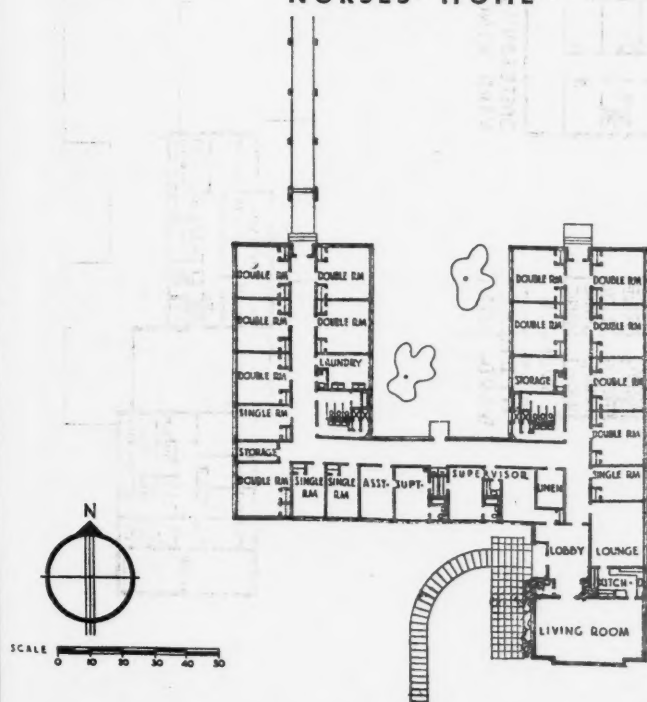
**PLANNING**—Originally the hospital was intended to be a six-storey reinforced concrete structure on the summit of a hill overlooking the town and Puget Sound. However, before contracts were placed, steel became controlled and electric lifts were also prohibited. So the plans were scrapped and replaced by the present ones of one-storey pavilion layout. The new site was extensive and covered with Douglas fir and cedar. As many of the trees as possible were preserved. Grass and shrubs in the climate of Bremerton remain green all the year round; so the buildings never look bare.

The plan of the hospital is, broadly speaking, a spinal corridor running east-west with five wings sticking out in the north, and four (later five) in the south. The south wings are nursing wings, in the north wings are (from west to east) the health centre, the obstetrical department, the surgery, and then kitchen and laundry. The offices are by the main entrance, in the west, the only part with an upper storey. They are situated so as to give equally easy access to health centre and hospital. At the east end are stores, boiler-house, etc. The Nurses' Home is a separate structure farther south with sitting-room, lounge, general living-room, laundry, small service kitchen and single and double bedrooms for 28 nurses. The nursing wings of the hospital have, in normal circumstances, 26 beds each.

**CONSTRUCTION**—This was directed by the War Production Board rules regarding materials. The foundations are concrete. The walls are framed, with brick veneer up to the head of the windows. The brick was stopped there to avoid the use of structural steel lintels. Occasionally, in particular near the window strips, walls are weather-boarded or flush-boarded. All trim is of wood. The floor construction consists of wood joists, plywood sheathing, and asphalt tile, except in the surgical and obstetrical wings, where ceramic tile was used, and in the kitchen and laundry which have concrete flooring. Secondary partitions are stud walls with lath and plaster. Tile-faced walls are used in the operating and obstetrical sections. Solid brick walls are placed between each wing and the long service corridor. The roof is constructed of wood joists with insulation between joists, roof sheathing of four-ply, and a flat built-up asphalt felt roofing. The underfloor spaces are ventilated. Continuous ventilation is also supplied for the roof spaces. Ventilation is necessary to prevent dry rot, which so easily occurs in that part of the United States and Canada, where the climate is very rainy and wet during most of the winter. Heat is supplied by direct radiation.

The photographs are by Roger Dudley

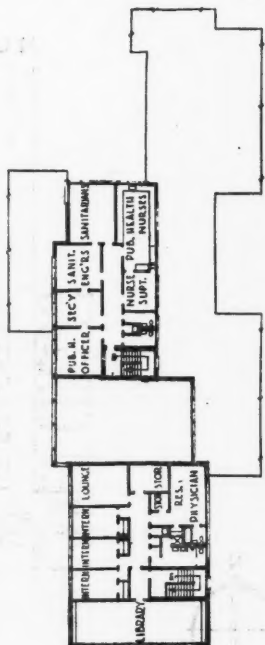
NURSES' HOME



# GROUND FLOOR



# UPPER FLOOR











8

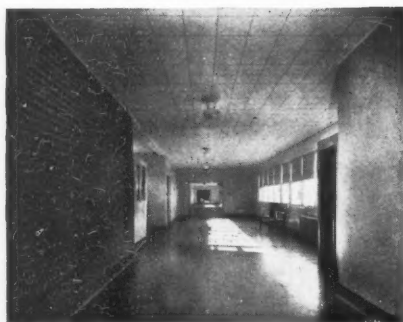
The main waiting corner in the lobby. Red brick, greyish green plaster, bluish green upholstery, with grey staining on the woodwork and grey asphalt tiling for the floor.



On entering the administration block the main lobby is reached, **8** and **9**, at the intersection of health clinic, medical ward and offices. **10** is the spinal corridor of the hospital. **11** a typical nursery room. **12** a washing-up room with the door open to an operating room.



9



10



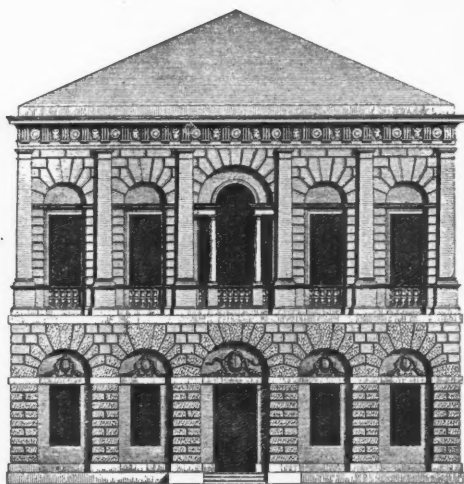
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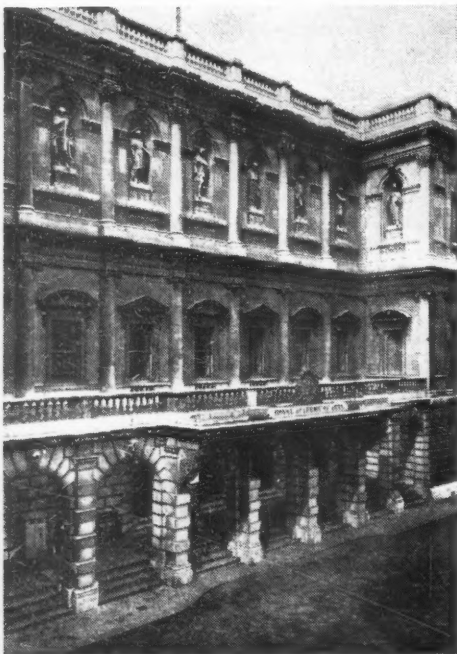
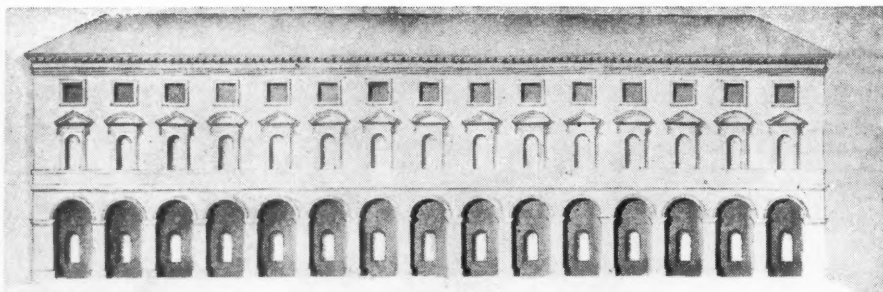
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**LORD BURLINGTON IN LONDON.** Above, General Wade's house from *Vitruvius Britannicus*, 1723. Below, from top to bottom: drawing for the Westminster School Dormitory, whose foundation stone was laid in 1722; Burlington House in its present state, altered by Banks and Barry about 1870; the Round Temple at Chiswick; and the former colonnade of Burlington House towards Piccadilly.



great doctor was first and foremost the champion of professional learning, the trouncer of amateur dilettantism, with which he would readily identify imposture, and in his righteous strictures we seldom fail to detect the ethical implication. "Except Lord Bathurst," said Johnson in a pronouncement upon literature and the arts generally, "none of Pope's noble friends were such as that a good man would wish to have his intimacy with them known to posterity; he can derive little honour from the notice of Cobham, Burlington or Bolingbroke." Johnson spoke for his generation and the cue was taken by his successors.\* Thus the late Mr. J. A. Gatch in the 1890's is obliged to write, but cautiously, of Lord Burlington that "He dabbled in design himself. We are probably justified in calling it dabbling." The late Sir Reginald Blomfield was determined to go further. He had no hesitation in applying the hammer to the last nail in the Burlington coffin. To his bourgeois mind it was so inconceivable that an amateur, and a nobleman, to boot, could be credited by men of sense, i.e. professionals, with building a house that without troubling to ascertain the facts, he bluntly attributed the Earl's work to other sources. Thus we learn from him that those parts of Burlington House which Burlington's contemporaries acknowledged as the Earl's, were built by Giacomo Leoni who, of all the Palladians, was the one architect now known not to have been associated with him in any of his constructions. It was left to the twentieth century to make a clean sweep of the generalizations of Burlington's late eighteenth and wholly nineteenth century detractors, by starting at the beginning and getting to the roots of the matter. Happily there have come forward within recent years disinterested historians with no axes to grind, but bearing in their minds the warning couplet of the Earl's contemporary and friend, John Gay :

"While Burlington's proportioned columns rise  
Does he not stand the gaze of envious eyes?"

Before I refer to the documentary vindications of Lord Burlington as a working architect through the researches of recent students, let me first of all mention a few of the acknowledgments of Burlington's particular architectural works by some of his contemporaries or near-contemporaries. These appear in various well-known publications, for all to have studied indeed in the nineteenth century as well as in our own.

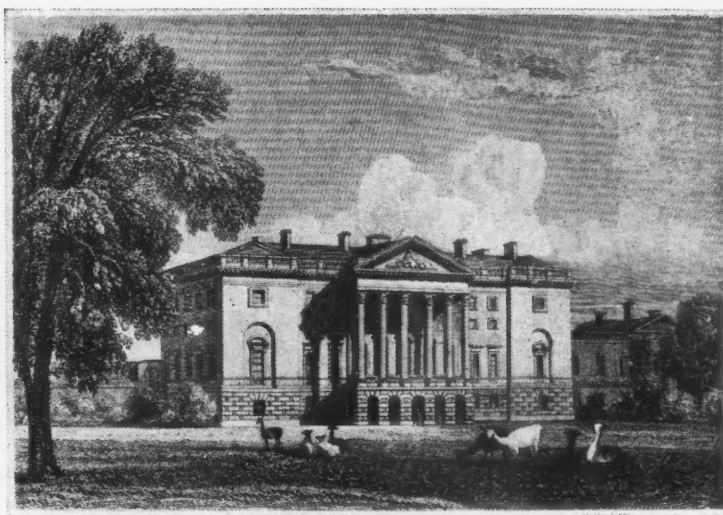
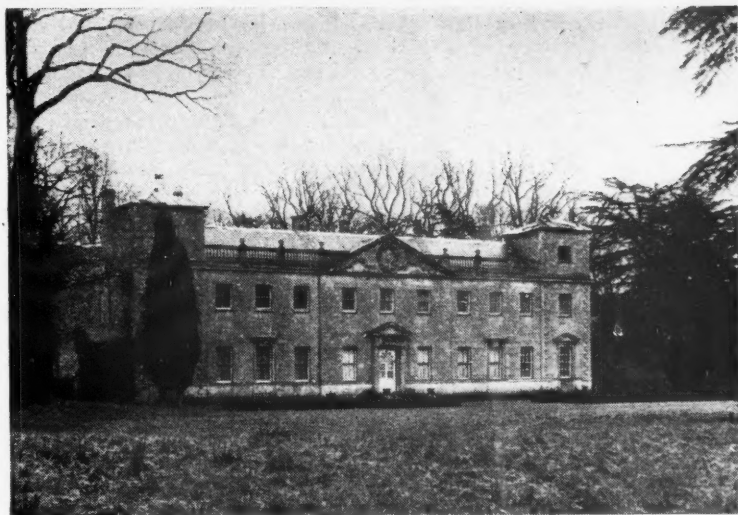
In the first place we have Colin Campbell's publication of his three first volumes of the *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1717-25) in the last of which appear a design and plan of a temple by Burlington with the following superscription and date: "The new Bagnio in the Gardens at Chiswick. Erected by the Rt. Honble Richard Boyle Earl of Burlington and Cork in the year 1717. The first essay of his Lordship's happy invention." The theoretic conventionality of the design would seem to corroborate Campbell's contention that this was an early inspiration. At this date Burlington was twenty-two years of age. In the same volume Campbell publishes an elevation (which he dates 1723) of General Wade's house in Great Burlington Street, which he likewise ascribes to the Earl. This is the house of which Horace Walpole, himself attributing it to Burlington and proclaiming the beauty of its facade, yet recounts with a touch of characteristic asperity how Lord Chesterfield said "As the General could not live in it to his ease, he had better take a house over against it and look at it." Secondly, there is Kent's *Designs of Inigo Jones*, issued in 1727, wherein are a design and plans of another, and surviving, round temple at Chiswick, of the Westminster School Dormitory, of the School and Almshouses at Sevenoaks, and of two presumably unexecuted houses, of which one is built upon an arcade. These are all described by Kent as the works of his patron. Thirdly, in 1730 Burlington published his own *Fabrice Antiche disegnate da Andrea Palladio Vicentine*, chiefly containing Palladio's drawings of the Roman Baths but including several designs and plans, which he claims as his own, of Chiswick House.

Fourthly, there are Woolfe's and Gandon's continuation of the *Vitruvius Britannicus* volumes published in 1767-1771 and here are given plates of the Assembly Rooms, York, and of Kirby Hall, Yorkshire, both of which are ascribed without hesitation to Burlington's authorship.

At about the same time (1771) Horace Walpole in his *Anecdotes of Painting*, contributes to the data by stating very definitely that Burlington was sole architect of the Duke of Richmond's house in Whitehall (burnt down in 1791) and of Lord Harrington's house at Petersham (built in 1732). Doctor Pococke, Bishop of Meath and Ossory, makes the same attribution of the latter in his *Tour through England* in 1757. "The house," he says, "is of good architecture, Lord Burlington's design." Walpole again is very emphatic upon Burlington's authorship of

\* Sir John Soane, to his exceptional credit, spoke of Burlington as "that great luminary of Architecture."





the famous semi-circular colonnade\* ("one of the finest pieces of architecture in England," according to Sir William Chambers) in front of Burlington House and the dramatic passage in which he describes his first sight of it is a high tribute from one who indulged in frequent sneers and jibes at the Earl. He writes: "As we have few samples of architecture more antique and imposing than this colonnade, I cannot help mentioning the effect it had on myself. . . . Soon after my return from Italy I was invited to a ball at Burlington House. As I passed under the gate by night it could not strike me. At daybreak, looking out of the window to see the sun rise, I was surprised with the vision of the colonnade that fronted me. It seemed one of those edifices in fairy tales that are raised by genii in a night's time."

And he goes on to vouchsafe this personal supposition: "Campbell in his *Vitruvius Britannicus* assumes to himself the new front of Burlington House and the gateway, but as he takes no credit for the colonnade, which is in a style very superior to his designs, we may safely conclude it was the Earl's own."

In justice to Campbell it must be confirmed that nowhere did he make claim to the colonnade as his own, whereas he does quite rightly claim his share in the western block and great gateway which are undoubtedly by his hand.

Finally in J. P. Neale's *Country Seats* (circa 1820) the author ascribes, on what authority I do not know, the centre block of Tottenham Park, Savenake, with its square flanking towers on the model of Palladio's Villa di Alcuni, and an alteration to the front of Leeds Castle, Kent, with the decoration of its lower rooms (demolished in 1822) to Burlington. Were not Neale so thoroughly reliable in his statements as well as in his drawings, it would not be worth while quoting this evidence.

With the dawning of the twentieth century, as I have said, a faint glimmer was thrown upon Lord Burlington's reputation. In 1904 Mr. Phéné Spiers had the grace to concede, in an otherwise scholarly article on Burlington House, that Burlington actually conceived the idea of the great colonnade but that since he "was not a draughtsman," he allowed another to design it for him. And Mr. Spiers followed Sir Reginald Blomfield in supposing that the professional draughtsman was none other than Leoni, and that Colin Campbell actually superintended the execution. Mr. Avray Tipping, however, was the first to dissipate the thick fog of anti-Burlington prejudice by calling for a thorough investigation of the Burlington papers known to exist. His call was answered by Mr. Fiske-Kimball who, in 1927, published his findings in a conclusive manner that finally vindicated Burlington's suppressed claims.

Briefly, Mr. Kimball's chief services lay in his refutation of Sir Reginald Blomfield's indictment that "no authentic drawings by Lord Burlington have yet been produced." He easily disproved this assertion by going to the fountain head direct. He simply consulted the Burlington-Devonshire collection of drawings deposited by the 8th Duke of Devonshire with the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1894. Amongst these

documents Mr. Kimball found a number of original sketches which he very convincingly proved to have been made by Lord Burlington himself. His contentions are substantiated by a careful comparison of the Earl's "somewhat angular and crabbed hand," where measurements and descriptions are attached to the sketches, with manuscript letters of Burlington's preserved in the British Museum, and other indisputable indications.

Further evidence of Burlington's authorship was forthcoming in an article in the Wren Society's 1934 volume on the Westminster Dormitory. I have already remarked that Kent himself publicly announced the Dormitory to be the Earl's work over two hundred years previously. This building is of first-rate importance in signifying perhaps the first concrete triumph of the newly revived Palladianism over the Baroque school that had so long prevailed under Wren's leadership and his followers, Vanbrugh, Hawksmoor, Archer and Gibbs. The foundation stone of the Dormitory was laid on April 22, 1722, by Lord Burlington who was described in the annals of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster as "Architectus." A recorded resolution, dated January 13, 1723-4, passed at a meeting of the Dean and Chapter, furthermore directed "That Dr. Broderick (a prebendary) do wait upon the Rt. Hon. ye Earl of Burlington and in the name of the Dean and Chapter return their humble thanks to his lordship for the care and trouble he has already taken in building ye College Dormitory and desire his lordship that he would be pleased to proceed in the same according to his Lordship's Plan."

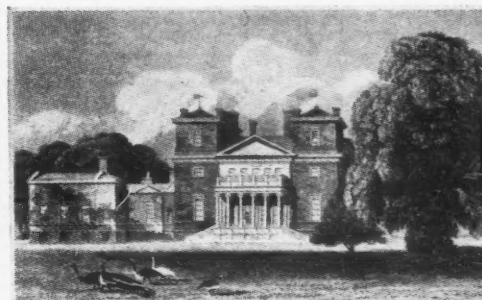
Sir Christopher Wren, who was still alive and in his ninety-second year, had the chagrin to see his own design for the Dormitory rejected in favour of the young Lord Burlington's which had been submitted to him.

Through the enterprise and industry of Dr. Wittkower of the Warburg Institute fresh correspondence and papers of Lord Burlington have now come to light. We may therefore await with some confidence yet further evidences of the creative ability of "this great person," to quote Walpole once more, "who had every quality of a genius and artist, except envy."

A lesser contributory factor to Burlington's long eclipse may well have been the man's own personal character and circumstance. Burlington was too much an artist, as Horace Walpole conceded, to need to vaunt his vocation or to convince

#### THE BURLINGTON

**STYLE.** Burlington's revival of severe Palladianism changed the taste of the aristocracy and gentry within a few years. On the right: Tottenham Park, attributed by Neale to Burlington himself. Top of this page, left: Lydiard Tregoz in Wiltshire, built for Lord Bolingbroke, the philosopher and writer, and ascribed by Dr. Pococke to Campbell; right, Thornodon, by James Paine.

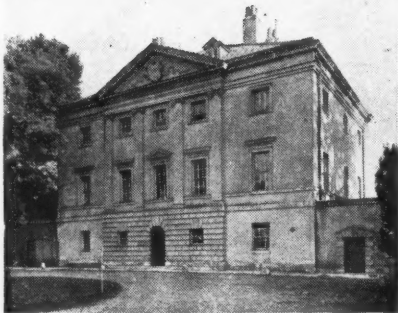


\* As recently as 1910 this colonnade was lying neglected in Battersea Park where it had been moved in 1868 when taken down. Half a century previously Soane had said in a lecture: "At least let us hope these beautiful colonnades will be spared."

† Neale states that these exterior alterations were done in the Gothic style and if this is so then we have an interesting sidelight on the great Palladian's versatility.



Top: a detail from the Westminster Dormitory—impeccable Palladianism. Wren's plans were turned down in favour of this new Augustan purity. The other two photographs are of Marble Hill, Twickenham. This house is attributed to Robert Morris, but it is highly probable that Lord Burlington was consulted on its general design and details. Compare with his Mansion House in York on the facing page.



public opinion. His markedly generous and modest disposition prevented him from making much insistence upon his authorship of the several buildings which we are now able safely to attribute to him. Again, we should remember that during his day Burlington possessed an even stronger claim to distinction among his co-intellectuals in having been born a lord than an architect. This, of course, is a disadvantage for which the Earl, poor man, can scarcely be held responsible but upon which his detractors have loved to dwell: their singular argument being that a man's artistic ability naturally depreciates according to the measure of his nobility.

It is true that we know little of Burlington's private life from letters and diaries. His public life in the conventional sense was practically non-existent. He did not enter Parliament in order to mislead his countrymen, nor did he lead them into battlefields. In fact he led the quiet and, in England at any rate, uneventful life of an artist-Mæcenas. We learn from the familiar, gossipy and almost bawdy letters addressed to him by his protégé, Kent, the coachbuilder's son, that his was a gentle, easy-going nature. We gather that this good nature could be roused to indignation at human brutality from the fact that he challenged his son-in-law, Lord Euston, to a duel owing to the latter's studied ill-treatment of his daughter. Perhaps he was a little too complaisant, if Lord Hervey's hint at Lady Burlington's infidelity with the boy's father, the Duke of Grafton, be true. Yet he was certainly a devoted husband and parent. He did everything to

encourage Lady Burlington's propensity to drawing and caricature. His generosity to Kent, Leoni and Ware is too well known to need recapitulating. The chief references to his virtues are to be gleaned from the distinguished verses of his distinguished friends, the poets Pope and Gay. It is perhaps true that poets are tempted to adulate their friends. It is certainly true that both Pope and Gay were very prone to vilify their friends at times, as well as their enemies.

However in sober prose we have Pope writing to Gay in 1722 as follows: "Pray make my sincere compliments to Lord Burlington, whom I have long known to have a stronger bent of mind to be all that is good and honourable than almost anyone of his rank." Six years previously in a letter to Mr. Jervas, Pope had written: "His own good qualities daily extend themselves to all about him," and at the decline of his life Pope would end his letters to Burlington, "My Lord, your most affectionate . . ." which in an age of stylised formality as regards correspondence was more than an expression of esteem. Gay, who was as fickle as he was mercurial, refers to Burlington as "generous Burlington," "Burlington unbiassed," and "beloved Burlington," and nowhere do we find either poet carping at the Earl in prose or verse.

I have referred to these few sketchy facets of Burlington's personality from which to deduce why he was so careless of his own reputation and why he was so ready to allow credit for much of his own creative genius to be attributed to his several friends and subordinates. I cannot in an article deal with all the buildings now known to be the works of Burlington, but in his own county alone we have enough examples to afford some estimate of his importance in the annals of British architecture.

Lord Burlington was a Yorkshireman and his ancestral home was at Londesborough Hall. Nothing, however, of the house which he inherited and embellished survives today. We know from the diary of that eccentric genius, Robert Hooke, that in the year 1676 he was employed upon the layout of the formal gardens by the 1st Earl of Burlington. An engraving of the old house appears in Kip's *Britannia Illustrata or Noblemen's Seats*, published in 1709 when the architect-earl was fourteen years old, and the year before he left on the grand tour that so decisively was to formulate his tastes. We only know that throughout his life he gradually transformed the house which was totally demolished in 1811.

Another lost house, known to be of Burlington's own design from an existing elevation drawing completed by Flitcroft, was that of Colonel Gee at Bishop's Burton, Yorkshire. In this

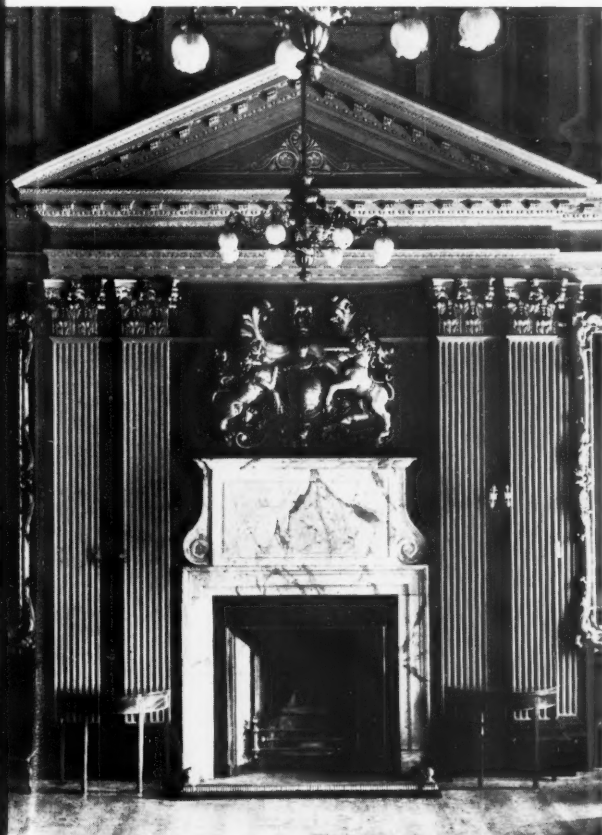


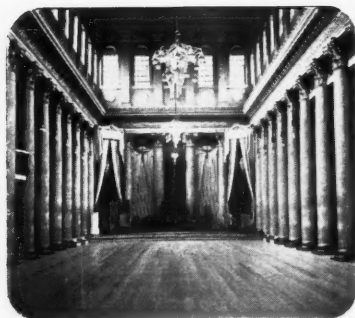




# **MANSION HOUSE, YORK**

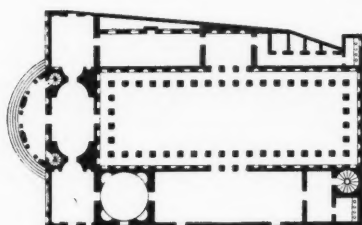
*This building, not so far familiar as one of Lord Burlington's works, can be proved to be his. It was designed and built between 1726 and 1732, and Lord Burlington was given the freedom of the City in gratitude for its erection.*





### ASSEMBLY ROOMS, YORK

*The Assembly Rooms have always been known as one of Lord Burlington's masterpieces. Plan and elevation are formed on the example of Palladio's interpretation of a famous passage in Vitruvius, referring to what he calls an Egyptian Hall. The building dates from 1730-32. It could be made into an ideal Concert and Meeting Hall for York.*



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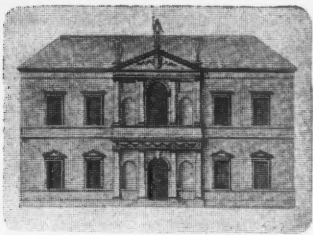
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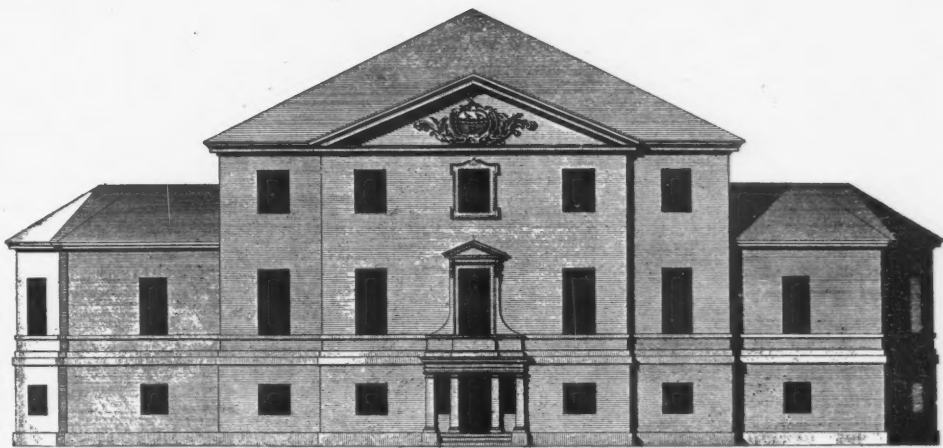
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Two destroyed houses by Lord Burlington. Above: Colonel Gee's house at Bishop's Burton, Yorkshire; from a drawing in the Burlington Collection—clearly derived from Inigo Jones. On the right: Kirby Hall, Ouseburn, twelve miles north-west of York, built about 1750 by Robert Morris to Lord Burlington's design. From Vitruvius Britannicus, Volume V, 1771.



elevation we detect an indirect derivation from Palladio through an earlier English medium, Inigo Jones. With only slight modifications Burlington reproduced in the projecting centre the end pavilions of Jones's garden front to his Whitehall Palace designs, dated 1619 and now in the Worcester College collections, Oxford. These unsigned designs of Jones, either altered by John Webb or indeed alternative but similar designs by Jones, themselves lost, but copied by Webb, were reproduced by Kent in his 1727 volume of Inigo Jones's works published at Burlington's expense. In this house for Colonel Gee we can trace in the simple window treatment of the recessed bays the direct influence of Jones and Webb.

With two other Yorkshire buildings, namely the Mansion House, York, and Kirby Hall at Ouseburn, we have more data from which to trace the development of Burlington's work. The reason for this is that the first is still standing today and that, not only the elevation but the plan of the second is given in Woolfe and Gandon's *Vitruvius Britannicus* Vol. V (1771). Although the latter was built quite twenty years after the Mansion House, I will deal with it first.

Kirby Hall, some twelve miles north-west of York, was unfortunately demolished within living memory. This house, extremely important in architectural history, was built about 1750 for a Mr. William Aislabie. There is little question that the design of it was solely Burlington's (sketches for it in his own hand exist), whereas the building was executed by Robert Morris with the young John Carr of York as his clerk of the works. Arthur Young who visited the place in 1768 unfortunately gives no account of the house itself. Instead he remarks on the beauty of the grounds, "greatly ornamented" with temples which we may well suppose were likewise by the Earl in the strictest Palladian taste.

The exterior, in so far as the central motif is concerned, is reduced to the simplest formula and affords an interesting comparison with the earlier Mansion House facade where the treatment is more elaborate. At Kirby we find the Earl's favourite Jones-Webb theme of semi-basement floor, piano nobile and upper floor of five windows, the two end bays slightly recessed, the central block of three windows simplified by lack of pilasters but crowned by a pediment with central cartouche. Here, however, we have flanking wings terminating with projecting bays, the only unclassical features to an otherwise severe elevation. These bays stamp the building with Burlington's emphatic touch which the plan indicates even more plainly. On the piano nobile the bays form, to the east, part of a vestibule with semi-circular ends, to the west, part of a smaller and completely circular vestibule. The plan reveals in the eastern vestibule subordinate niches as in Burlington's early gallery at Chiswick. This skilful and highly successful introduction of circular and semi-circular rooms, not under a central dome, marks a definite advance not only on the interiors of Palladio, Jones and Webb but of Wren and the baroque architects also.

To return to the Mansion House at York, this building which in plan, design and treatment of both exterior and interior suggests the hand of Burlington, has never yet been acknowledged as his. On the contrary, for no convincing reason his authorship of it has consistently been denied. During the 1720's York had

become a recognized resort for the noble and well-to-do, and it was considered high time that a dignified domicile should be provided for the Lord Mayor. Lord Burlington, who was Lord Lieutenant for the county, sponsored this project of the Corporation, and what was more natural than that he should proffer his services as architect? It has never been disputed that the Corporation invited him to build the Assembly Rooms in 1730. At any rate, in confirmation of this theory we need only read the following extract from the contemporary Davis's *Walks in the City of York*: "Our city," he writes, "may boast of possessing amongst its attractions of modern date two public buildings—the Assembly Rooms and the Mansion House—constructed from the designs of an amateur architect, who was not only distinguished as a person of high rank and ancient descent, but who had the good fortune to have his name transmitted to posterity in the imperishable language of poetry."

The Corporation were evidently satisfied with the result, for in gratitude for the Mansion House, Burlington was "admitted to the freedom of this City gratis." Indeed so successful was the result considered to be that the City of London at once followed suit and its Corporation decided that their Lord Mayor must be housed no less gloriously. Burlington accordingly submitted a design for a London Mansion House, but probably due to a misunderstanding the Earl's design was turned down in favour of one by George Dance.

The York Mansion House was therefore, on this historic evidence alone, designed, planned and constructed by Lord Burlington between the years 1726 and 1732. It has a rusticated ground floor of five openings, the central entrance approached by a railed perron. From the first floor, or piano nobile, spring four Ionic pilasters enclosing alternate elliptical and triangular pedimented windows and supporting a central pediment. The pediment bears an armorial achievement sprouting two sprays of palm leaves in the subsequent John Vardy manner. The two end bays of one window to each floor are slightly recessed as at Kirby. Over all runs a plain parapet.

The elevation then of the Mansion House closely resembles the later and simplified front of Kirby Hall, and is only a slight variation of Palladio's prototype palace for Giulio Capra at Vicenza. It bears an even more striking resemblance to Marble Hill at Twickenham, which has been attributed, again according to conjecture, to Robert Morris and to the Earl of Pembroke. Marble Hill was certainly built for Mrs. Howard, afterwards Countess of Suffolk, the supposed mistress of George II. In 1724 her friend, Mrs. Campbell of Coombe Bank, wrote of her as being "up to the ears in bricks and mortar," so we may suppose the house was practically completed in 1725, which is only one year before the Mansion House was begun. Mrs. Howard was as close a friend of Lord Burlington as ever she was of Lord Pembroke, whereas Robert Morris was a close associate of the architect-earl, as we have already seen in the building of the later Kirby Hall. It is not at all improbable that Burlington had a large hand in the design of Marble Hill which in essentials and in many particulars bears the strong impress of his special brand of Palladianism.

The whole of the central portion in the front of the Mansion House of the first floor or piano nobile is taken up by one long



saloon, forming a cube, with coved ceiling encroaching upon the bedroom floor, and two noble fireplaces at either end. A similar disposition was made at Marble Hill, where the saloon, also a cube of twenty-four feet, on the piano nobile occupies the whole of the central block on the garden front, the coved ceiling likewise encroaching upon the bedroom storey. This arrangement was not followed at Kirby where, on the piano nobile, a smaller acentric saloon competes with a long gallery for supreme size and splendour.

Finally, we come to the York Assembly Rooms about which adequate descriptive matter has elsewhere been written. Even the nineteenth century did not dispute Burlington's sole authorship of this important building, however hard it tried to slight it. "Monotonous and poverty-stricken," J. A. Gotch called the effect. It has, alas, been left for the twentieth century to allow it to fall into sad misuse and disrepair.

"On the 1st March, 1730," wrote the *York Courant*, "being the Queen's birthday, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, with all the gentlemen in the town, laid the foundation stone of the theatre which is to be erected on the plan of the Earl of Burlington, our Lord Lieutenant and Governor. It is to be for all public diversions such as Assemblies, Concerts of Music, etc." As early as 1732 the Corporation gave public thanks to the Earl whom they addressed as "sæculi Mæcenæ." Four years later Francis Drake in his *Eboracum* wrote: "The room is an antique Egyptian Hall. . . . The design was first set on foot by a set of public-spirited gentlemen. . . . Our noble Lord somewhat altered (the design) in its dimensions from Palladio . . . and added the common assembly room, etc., on one side and the offices on the other as further conveniences."

The public-spirited gentlemen, to whom Drake refers, brought stone from the quarries of Cawood and Huddleston. Distant gentry contributed odd blocks of marble. These facts are of interest in demonstrating how even the squires of remote provinces had been bitten with the rage for amateur architecture. For instance when Burlington designed the existing pavement under the Minster lantern, a Lancashire squire, Sir William Gascoigne, imported from his estate at Purlington a special stone

of white texture. This white stone was accordingly varied with the blue stone which the Earl provided, and which was in fact old grave stones reversed and dressed.

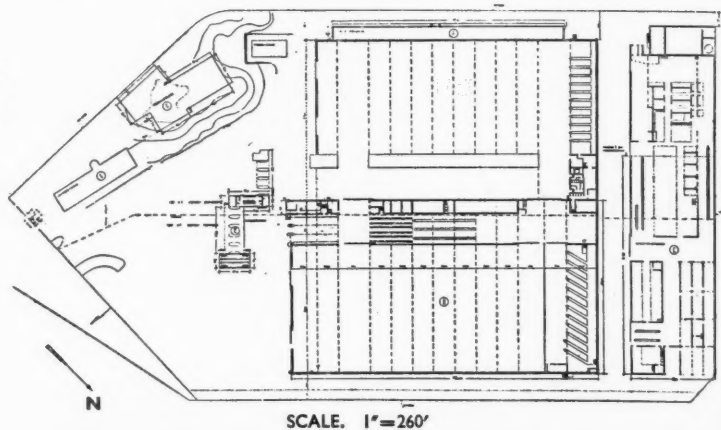
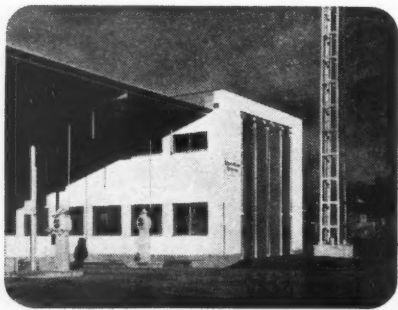
Such then was the enthusiasm for the new Assembly Rooms. In the opinion of Woolfe and Gandon the achievement "for elegance and convenience is not surpassed by anything of the kind in the kingdom," and was "a lasting monument to his Lordship's taste in architecture."

We may suspect that the laudable enthusiasm of the worthy citizens of York, the ringing of church bells, the proclamations, the addresses, were not so much the sense of an æsthetic as of a utilitarian satisfaction. Yet who can safely judge the motives of popular demonstrations, especially among our forebears? The fact remains that the Assembly Rooms mark the culminating achievement of Burlington's adaptation of the Roman medium of building to a thoroughly national expression. These Rooms are the most advanced form of Burlington's conception of classical architecture. They are the high-water mark beyond which he did not go. He boldly adopted Palladio's design for a public hall, as Drake had had the wit to understand, modified it to conform to an extremely awkward site, shaped like a rhomboid—in this respect he triumphed as successfully as did Wren over several of his City Church sites—and developed in it his personal genius for semi-circular and apsidal forms. These are more pronounced by him here than at his earlier Chiswick, whereas his segmental entrance wall and wings with their peculiar screened openings are features hitherto never used in English building. Robert Adam recognized this innovation and copied it at Kedleston Hall and Kenwood without somehow fully grasping the strict regard for Roman forms which Burlington alone assimilated and never quite transmitted to his followers. The standard he set was too chaste for the frivolous tastes of his immediate architectural descendants and so it was not developed.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.** The photos of the Assembly Rooms are reproduced by kind permission of Miss Leslie Lawrence, those of the Mansion House and the Westminster Dormitory by the courtesy of the National Buildings Record. The Round Temple, Burlington House, and Marble Hill are from photos taken by Country Life.

## CITY BUS GARAGE IN STOCKHOLM

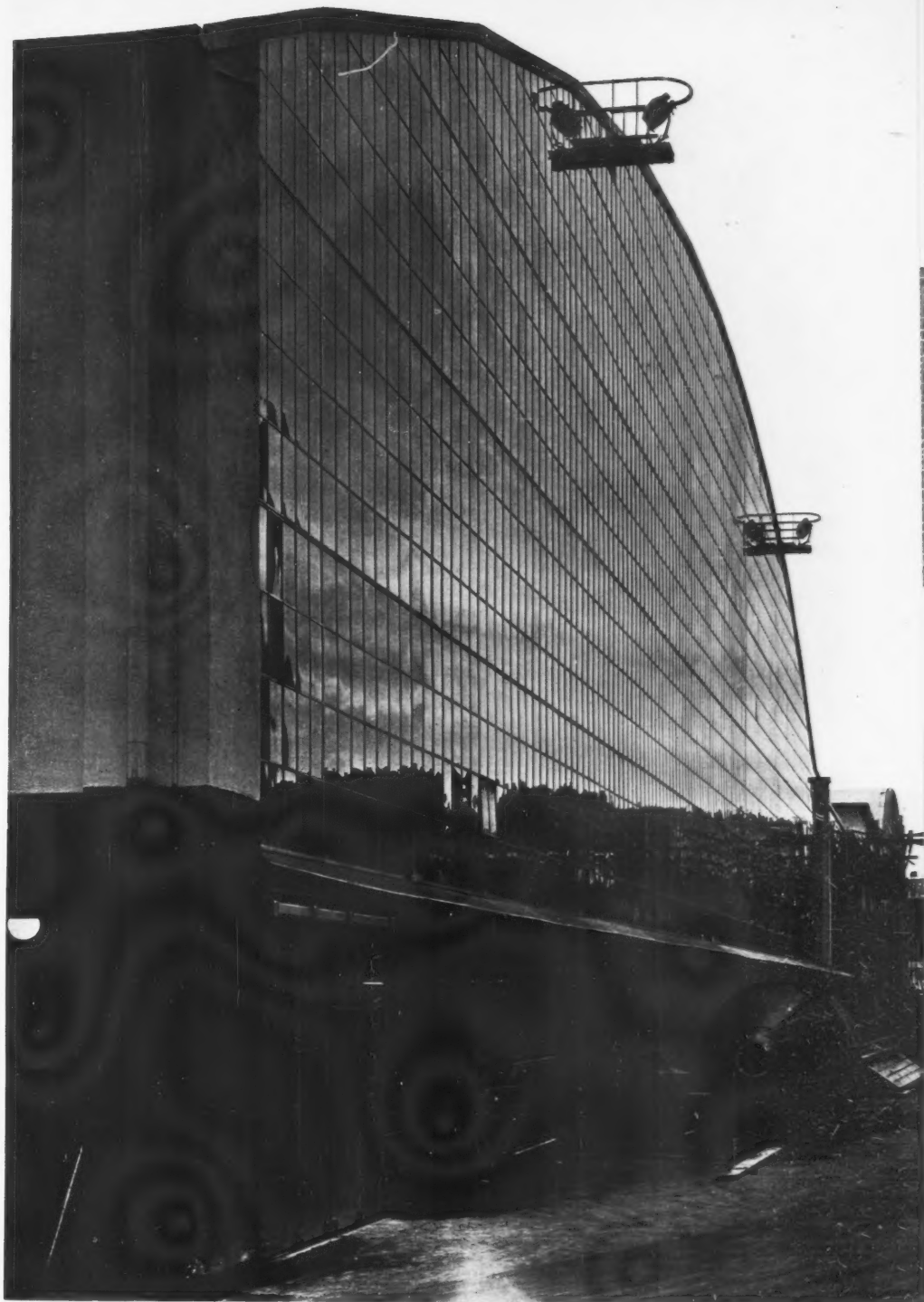
The filling station, 1, is a separate little building in front of the south east facade of the garage proper. Its back appears on the left in 5. The garage itself consists of two vast halls.



London has every right to be proud of its transport architecture and of the design of the Passenger Transport Board's rolling stock. Taking its sum total it can safely be said that no better designed stations and trains exist in any of the other big cities of Europe and America. Whether this astonishingly high standard—astonishing because of the contrast to the work of the British railway companies—will be kept up after the war, without the late Frank Pick to watch over it, remains to be seen. Meanwhile, it may be of interest to show a few photographs of one of the best garage buildings on the Continent, the Central City Bus Garage, of Stockholm, completed after the beginning of the war. Its architect is Eskil Sundahl, famous for his Kvarnholmen mills and elevators (see *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*, September, 1943) and his other work for the Swedish Co-op. The building is on a much larger scale than is usual in London, over 500 by 500 feet in size and has, instead of the division into comparatively low bays which characterises the L.P.T.B.'s designs, two vast halls of elegant steel construction. The detail especially is worth careful study, crisp in its engineering and perfectly blended with the more strictly architectural motifs such as the trellis in 5, and the fenestration in 1. The buses themselves should also be noted in passing. There was a danger in some of the L.P.T.B.'s more recent, single-decker types to succumb to the temptation of modish stream-lining. The two Swedish types, seen in 3 and 4, seem to avoid this.

**Eskil Sundahl**

The steel and glass vault shows proudly on both sides, **2** and **5**. The enormous window in **2** without any mullions is suspended from the steel frame behind. The detail of the trusses and the sky lighting, **3** and **4**, deserves attention. So do the buses, excellent examples of Swedish design, up-to-date, yet never showy.



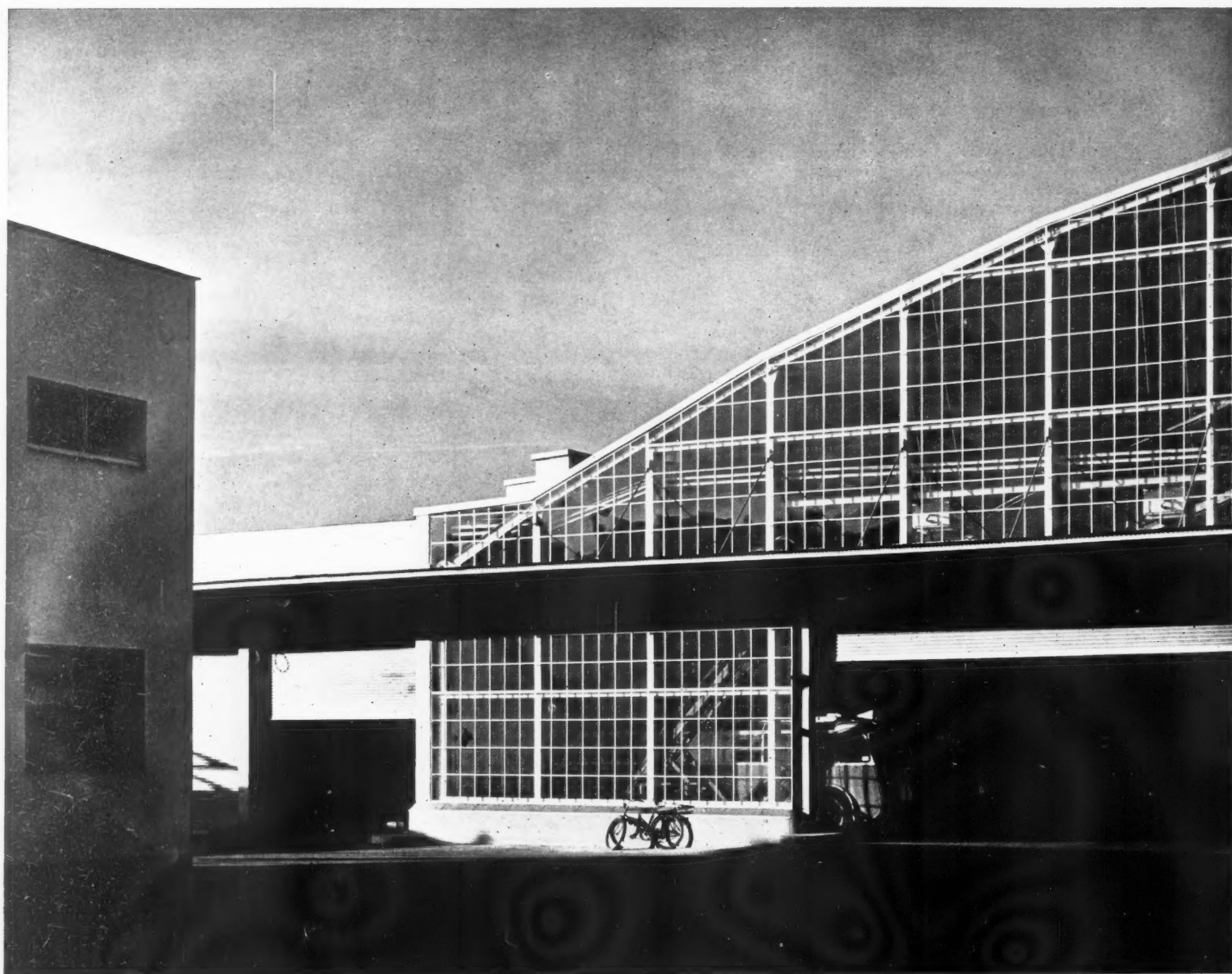
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Photographs by G. E. Kidder Smith, I.A.I.



# DESIGN REVIEW

for a discussion of new designs, new materials and new processes, and as a reminder of the specific visual qualities of our age which war necessities are bringing out in their purest form, and which a more carefree and fanciful post-war world should not forget.

## Advisory Committee

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## THE FUTURE OF WALLPAPERS

An exhibition of wallpapers, past, present and future, was opened at the Suffolk Street Galleries in London on May 8. It was organized by the Central Institute of Art and Design for the wallpaper industry. A critique of it appears on the following page, and illustrations of ten out of the 130 selected designs for wallpapers on pages 23 and 24. The exhibition raised afresh the problem of the wallpaper in contemporary interiors. Many architects, especially about 1930, denied it any scope or future. The article below is a fair balancing of pros and cons. It comes from R. Y. Goodden, whose Asterisk wallpapers are the most constructive individual English contribution to wallpaper design.

### a talk at the "Salutation"

"WALLPAPER?" said the barmaid. She shook her head. She had the air of one who is willing to concede a good deal, but not *that* much. "You two gentlemen puzzle me," she said. "Just now you were talking about all those new things—plastics and plywood and that—though personally I like a new coat of paint as well as anything. But wallpaper—I don't know. It's old-fashioned. Nothing new about it, nothing streamlined. . . ." She made an airy gesture, I suppose to indicate a volume of living accommodation whizzing through space.

My friend and I were discussing houses. I call him my friend, though half an hour ago I had never set eyes on him. We had met casually in the bar, and we seemed to be the only people in the village who took our pleasures seriously enough to be inside the "Salutation" at a quarter past six. There was no one else there except the barmaid.

He ordered more beer, and watched it frothing from the tap. It gave him an idea: "The proper place for streamlining in a house," he said sternly, "is the inside of the water pipes. Though mind you, Rosie," he went on, "I know what you mean. There's a lot to be said for these new materials in their proper place. They save trouble. They don't collect dust, and you can wipe greasy marks off them. And they look nice and fresh too—"

"Just the things for the kitchen and bathroom, in fact," I put in. "We said so just now."

We knew quite well that the kitchen at home fell short of the ideal. We had discussed this already. For the price of a couple of pints of beer we had installed beautiful labour-saving kitchens. We had dealt with the bathroom too. It was bright and shiny now, and the water was always hot. Then we started on the other rooms, but somehow our ideas were less definite; until suddenly he came out with this quite positive idea about wallpaper.

I thought it was worth pursuing. "Why wallpaper?" I said. "Why not paint or distemper?"

"Well," he said, "the sort of thing we've been talking about—shiny surfaces, rounded corners, no frills, cleanliness and efficiency—oh, I'm all for it. But you don't want it everywhere. There's something missing. It's—it's—" he fumbled for the right word.

"Impersonal?" I suggested. "Negative?"

"That's right," he said. "It's negative. We don't want to look round the room and say to ourselves: 'There's nothing wrong with this room; it's sensible and inoffensive'; we want to say: 'This is *our* room; this is just how we wanted it to be; these are all the things we chose

ourselves.' So we want to have patterns on the walls—some of them, anyway. Wallpaper."

It sounded fair enough to me, and I said so. But Rosie spotted a flaw. "You can choose paint just as much as wallpaper," she said. "Or distemper."

"It's not so much fun," he said. "You choose a colour and put it on the walls. Very nice too, but it doesn't look all that different from what some of the neighbours have got. For all your friends know you might just have said to the builder: 'We'll have a pale green in here, Mr. Prentice,' and left it at that. But when you choose a pattern it's different. Your friends can see that you've thought about it and decided. You've backed your fancy. If the pattern's got any guts you've taken a risk. I think that's good for you. I don't believe in Safety First."

Rosie was unconvinced. "I don't like patterns on the walls. It's unfashionable. When I marry and have a home," she said, "I want it to be up to date. I want the latest. Not just in the kitchen, either. Everywhere. You've got to move with the times."

I looked round the room. It was old and nondescript, altered a dozen times. There was a curved matchboard partition on the side next the passage, grained and varnished. It was a deep golden brown. There was a dado round the rest of the room done the same way, and above it the walls were of plaster colourwashed pink. The plaster was uneven and looked very thick and soft, like pastry. The floor was paved with yellowish-grey bricks laid flat—what they call "pammets" in those parts. I looked up at the ceiling. It was bulging and shiny and dark with smoke and varnish: dark and yet luminous, like gunmetal. The table had a scrubbed elm top—scrubbed into ridges and furrows—and the seats and backs of the settles were made of perforated plywood, pale yellow. The bar was covered with a metal which looked like old pewter, and the handles of the beer engine were of blue and white earthenware, like old-fashioned bedroom crockery. In the wall opposite the bar was a Victorian grate in a wide brick surround, all painted black, with a good fire burning in it; and a cracked old oil-painting hanging above, almost as black as the grate. The only other picture was a faded lithograph showing a brick and slate brewery of impressive size, planted surprisingly in green (now yellow) fields, with some prize medals festooning the sky; and in a dark corner was an Act of Parliament clock, blackish green, with thin spidery hands and gilt arabic figures faded to a dark copper colour—those exaggeratedly thick and thin figures beloved of clockmakers. It

must have meant plenty of work every morning to keep that room clean. But it was warm and friendly.

"Why do you think we come here?" "I said to Rosie. 'Why don't we go to the 'Rocket'?' It's the same beer." (The "Rocket" was a new pub on the edge of the village by the main road. It hadn't had time to develop a soul, and it wasn't built of the materials which harbour a soul, anyway. Too much glass and chromium.)

Rosie smiled enigmatically. Perhaps she thought she was the attraction.

My friend told her. "It's cosier here," he said. "I dare say the temperature's just the same over there, but it doesn't feel the same. It feels bleak: impersonal. This place seems to welcome you even when it's empty. Make yourself at home, it says. It's got character. It's mellow."

"That's it," I said. "It's mellow. It's mellow because it's been used and knocked about for a couple of hundred years; because people have enjoyed themselves in here all that time. They've left their mark on it all over the place. The whole room's lined with age, like an old man's face. I like the lines. They tell you what sort of a life the place has had. They tell you its character."

Rosie surveyed the room disparagingly. "You don't have to clean it," she said. "You can have it and welcome. I don't know what you see in it." She refilled our glasses. "Anyway," she added, challengingly, "there's no paper on the walls."

"No," said my friend, "there isn't. It's a red herring."

"I don't think it is," I replied. "I wasn't just thinking of why I like this bar and don't like the lounge at the 'Rocket.' I was trying to think out what makes some rooms interesting and others dull. This is only one kind of likeable room. There's nothing very special about it when you look round, but it's got a character: a character which has come gradually, with age. I was wondering how you can give a new room a likeable character too—of a different kind."

He held his glass up to the light. "It's a difficult question," he said. "But I think there are two things about this old room that make you like it. You can tell it's been used a lot and cared for a long time; and that makes you feel at home here—not quite a stranger even the first time you come in. That's one thing. But I think its age has made it more worth *looking* at than it was when it was newly built, just for the sake of something to look at. It isn't just that all the things in here have grown old: they've all grown old differently, and they've all got more interesting in a different way. When you look from one to another you get quite a different feeling. There's variety; variety and interest. That's the second thing."

He filled his pipe and lit it. "Well," he went on, "you can't manufacture old age. You can't get that kind of enjoyment into a new room. Even if you could," he added with a smile at Rosie, "you'd be making a lot of unnecessary work. But I don't see why you can't get the other: different kinds of surface—things catching the light in quite different ways."

It seemed to me that you could do it within limits, but rather narrow limits. Smooth surfaces were easy to clean and rough ones weren't, and Rosie's wish for something smooth and shiny was reasonable enough from that point of view. I said as much.

"All right," he said. "You can't have it both ways, of course. We've got to make our houses easy to run, and that means making them smooth and simple inside: shapes as well as surfaces. All right. That doesn't mean that they've got to be as bleak and shiny as the 'Rocket,' but it does mean that they aren't going to be as interesting as rooms used to be before housework was such a problem, unless we do something about it. That's another reason why I like the idea of patterns on the walls."

Another customer came in and the barmaid moved off to serve him; but not without a Parthian shot: "You can have patterns in the curtains and things. They don't have to be on the walls."

"She's quite right, of course," he said to me. "Having them on the walls is only one way of doing it. You've got the walls and the ceiling and the floor and the furnishings, and it doesn't matter which are patterned and which are plain, so long as the result's worth looking at. Come to that, you could have everything plain except the ceiling, if you didn't mind lying down on the floor now and then to look at it." I laughed. "Might be an idea for a bedroom, though," he said, seriously. "No, I don't

say that having patterns on the walls is the only way of making a room interesting. Not a bit. I just happen to fancy it myself, that's all."

"I like the idea too," I said, "and I think there's more to it than just happening to fancy it. I don't know what your own house is like now, but at home we've had the walls plain almost as long as I can remember: white or cream, you know—occasionally a pale colour. It was a change when we first did it. Clean and fresh. And if the other things in the room were worth looking at—were ornamental, I mean: carved furniture, curly gilt frames, Oriental rugs, or whatever it might be—then it wasn't a bad thing to have the walls plain. It showed up the rest of the stuff better. But since then everything else has got plainer and plainer as well; and now when you build a house, and build in half the furniture too, the chances are when it's finished that there's practically nothing for your eye to dwell on. You go into a room and you can see all there is to it at a glance. Five minutes, and you're beginning to get bored. I think we've overdone it, and I think it's a good plan to liven up the walls with patterns, because I don't think most of us are in the mood for other kinds of ornament yet—carving and that sort of thing, I mean. . . . But I don't know that theorizing about it gets us anywhere. We like the idea of wallpaper and that ought to be enough. Let's go ahead and have it—when we can."

"You started it," he said. "It was your red herring. Have another."

\* \* \* \* \*

You can still get tolerable beer from some of the small country breweries, and this seemed to be one of them. I sauntered over and looked at the lithograph. Perhaps if you dumped those buildings down in a town they wouldn't look quite so extensive. Perhaps the style of architecture made them look bigger than they were. The architect hadn't really wanted to design a brewery, I thought. There was a crenellated screen wall enclosing the site, which you entered through a handsome gatehouse. Somewhere in the middle was a tall, massive building, suspiciously like a keep. The gatehouse walls were ornamented with a diaper of blue headers. How odd, I thought. Someone not so long ago had bothered to make a pattern with the brickwork of a brewery, and now it was possible to discuss the pros and cons of having patterns on the walls at home. Rosie was right, of course, when she said that it was old-fashioned; but she didn't go nearly far enough. It was much more than old-fashioned: as old as the hills. It was the most natural thing in the world to put patterns on the things you made and had around you. It showed that you loved them, that you enjoyed looking at them. Perhaps we had lost our gusto.

I rejoined my friend. "What sort of papers are you going in for?" I asked. "What sort of patterns?"

He considered before replying: "It'll depend on what you can get. But there's one thing I'm clear about. I do mean patterns. I don't mean imitation plastic paint and I don't mean those anaemic jumbles of what they call cubist shapes. And that's about all you could get before the war."

"You could get patterns, and good ones too, if you were determined enough," I said. "But it needed a lot of perseverance, and they were generally foreign when you found them. I agree, you couldn't go into the nearest wallpaper warehouse and choose a good pattern from the book on the counter. Or if you did, it was a lucky accident. And if it was a good one, it had probably been designed a hundred years ago. I may be doing the industry an injustice, but I got the impression that most of the manufacturers weren't interested in real designs. I think they got the idea that patterns were out of fashion and that something pretty non-committal was the thing, which was true at one time; but then I think they kept them out of fashion—and not only patterns, but wallpaper altogether—because they made good designs so scarce, and because what they did produce was mostly so dull. After all, if you don't have patterns there's no particular point in having wallpaper at all, except to keep the plaster together in a house that's falling to bits."

"I'm not so charitable as you," he said. "I always thought the explanation was that papers without any design to them saved trouble all round. You don't need the designer for a start—because I wouldn't give that name to the man who decides what colour of porridge to spread on the paper and whether to make it lumpy or smooth, nor to the man who arranges those cubist affairs, because it doesn't matter how they're arranged: you just go on overprinting in

wishy-washy colours until it's all-overish enough to offend nobody; and you don't need to print them carefully because the register of colours doesn't matter; and finally you don't need to hang them well, because when there's nothing worth calling a pattern, you don't notice whether it's lined up accurately or not. No, I think it's all part of the general business of making everything foolproof and untroublesome. Taking the skill out of it."

I didn't agree with that. "It would be too short-sighted. Take away the need for skill, and the next thing you know there's nobody left who can do the job at all. And then you can't have wallpaper even when you want it. That can't be true. It wouldn't pay them."

He didn't seem convinced. "Let's hope you're right," he said. "In that case we ought to get good patterns again. What kind do you fancy yourself?"

"All kinds," I said. "There's no kind of pattern I bar. All I do bar is being content to reproduce old patterns. I want to see new ones."

"No flowers by request?" he said.

"No," I said, "I don't mean that. I wouldn't rule out flower patterns. But if we do have flowers, let's have to-day's, not yesterday's with a dose of aspirin in the water to revive them. You can't mistake Gothic flowers for Jacobean flowers, or Jacobean for Victorian; and to-day's flowers ought to look as fresh and different as all the others did when they were new."

\* \* \* \* \*

The bar was filling up, and we moved away over to the fire.

"That shouldn't be hard," he said. "Look at the seedsmen's catalogues. Even the flowers themselves are different every year, let alone what the artist can do with them. But they've done all sorts of other things with wallpaper in the past, you know, and I'd like to see most of them tried again. Flock, for instance: not to imitate brocade, but used in another way. What about alternate stripes of flock and plain? Wouldn't that look good? It needn't be stripes, of course. It's the variety of surface I'm getting at."

"And what about that shiny finish that looked like satin—" I began. "Talc," he said, "or mica, wasn't it? Yes, I'd like to see that come back. It was a treat the way those papers went light and dark in different parts of a room. And landscape papers too. There must be some artists now—"

"There are," I said. "I can think of two or three who'd be in their element: who could do landscape papers as gay and fantastic as the Chinese, and quite unlike any that have ever been done before."

"Well, I hope they will," he said. "And there was that heavy embossed stuff. I don't want pretence Elizabethan ceilings, which was what it generally amounted to; but I saw a staircase dado covered with it the other day, in a sort of pleated design. It looked pretty good. I think you could do something fresh with that. It was generally white as far as I remember, but I don't suppose it need be."

It occurred to me that we had wandered a bit from the original point—that you could make smooth surfaces more interesting by putting patterns on them. Perhaps he was thinking the same, for when he spoke again it was of printed patterns. "You need all kinds," he was saying: "big ones and small ones, quiet ones and strong ones. You may want the pattern to be little more than a texture on the walls, until you get close to it and see that it is a pattern as well; and then again you may want the pattern to be the main thing in the room. It depends on the room, and yourself, and whether you've got pictures in it, and so on. Come to that—" he hesitated, "—yes, you might use two quite different papers in the one room: a small quiet pattern—or just a plain colour—on most of the walls, and a bold pattern where you'd like a bit of extra decoration—over the mantelpiece, or behind the piano, or in the corner where the table is; somewhere like that. You don't have to have all the walls the same, do you?"

I glanced round the room, at the pink plaster walls and the golden brown match-board partition. "You certainly don't," I said, and noticed the clock again. It was a nice clock, and it was time I went home—judged by the clock, that is. But there are other ways of judging the time, especially in a pub, and it was also high time that I showed my appreciation of this excellent fellow's company.

"Have another," I said.

R. Y. GOODDEN

## the exhibition

Wherein lies the exceptional importance of the wallpaper exhibition? First of all, it is the first in this country in which an entire industry and only one industry shows in representative products its past, present and possible future. Every manufacturing firm has shared in its cost, and every firm is represented in it. At the same time the selection of exhibits has not been in the hands of the manufacturers themselves, but in those of an independent body: the Central Institute of Art and Design. Moreover the presentation was left to two progressive architects, Mr. Eric Brown and Mr. Stefan Buzás, and they have made an excellent job of it.

For clarity, the exhibition is divided into five main sections: history, technique, specimen rooms, wallpapers on the market in 1989, and new designs for the future.

The Historical Section consists of 283 papers, and demonstrates, with almost complete continuity, the development of paper decorations from the sixteenth century until 1936. Some of the earliest English papers found "in situ" are shown, early English flocks, the development of block printing in distemper colours, block printing on early machine printed grounds, and finally the development of machine printing after 1835 when Burnstead invented his first colour-printing machine which by 1854 was capable of printing fifty-four colours. On this and the technical section no special comments are here needed. If you are specially interested in them, you can easily find information on them in several books mentioned in the carefully compiled and annotated catalogue.

The six Specimen Rooms may be tasteful, but they are certainly disappointing in range. They are all of one class, and that class is hardly the one which Mr. Sitwell in his introduction to the catalogue rightly calls "the permanent market for wallpapers." The most interesting detail is a design of Graham Sutherland's used by Lady Clark in her specimen room. It forms the cover of this number. In strong contrast to the Mayfairish character of the six rooms are some bold sketches of contemporary rooms by Stefan Buzás, showing suggestions as to how wallpaper can be used to-day. While one may not always agree with the choice of particular papers, as shown on narrow screens down the side of each sketch, they show a courageous approach to the problem and point to quite a number of stimulating solutions.

Now when we come to the wallpapers of yesterday and to-day, the five hundred patterns shown represent, in the words of the catalogue, "a very careful selection made from the many thousands of designs which will be put into production when paper is available." It is worth considering for a moment the condition of design generally throughout the industry to-day. Of these five hundred papers certainly not more than fifty, possibly fewer, are really good designs and contemporary in character. This means that if the Central Institute has selected well—and there is no reason to doubt that—of the several thousands in existence before the war, there are only something like two per cent. good designs. So the standard of design in the wallpaper industry as a whole is low. But the exhibition here fulfils a special need. How many architects have time to-day to search through these thousands of papers to find a possible design? By means of this exhibition all that tedious work is eliminated. Would it not be a good idea to make a permanent selection available for reference purposes?

Considering this state of affairs in trade, how promising is it that for the final section of new designs, artists of such calibre as Graham Sutherland have submitted work. There are many well-known names here and many quite unknown ones, and for the most part what they have done is good. 130 designs are on show out of about 400 which were chosen. Those not exhibited are in a portfolio available to manufacturers but not on view to the public. Will the manufacturers use them? We, who are not manufacturers, can at least help by creating the demand.

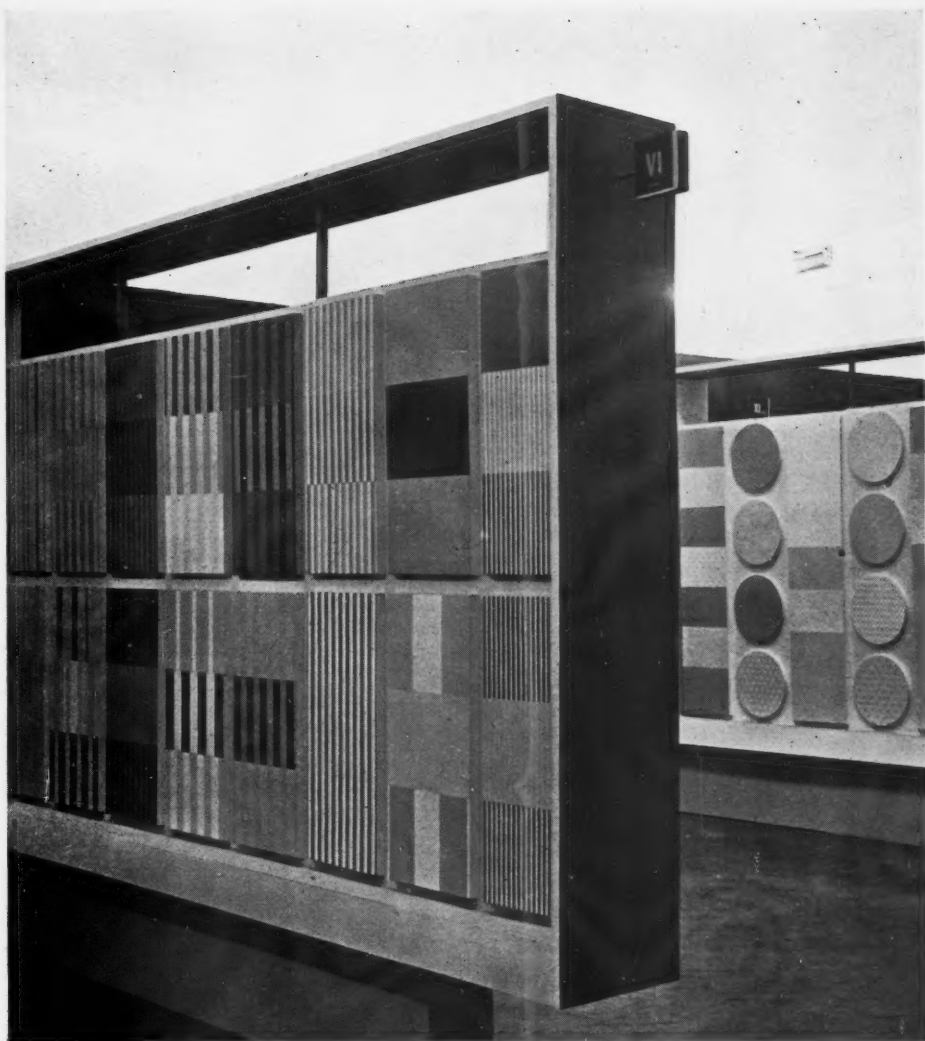
As a final point, Mr. Sitwell says in the introduction to the catalogue, that "the Golden period of the pictorial wallpaper was the first third of the nineteenth century which corresponds surely enough with the Empire or Regency." He then goes on to refer to this period as "a minor age in architecture but a great age in typography and the printed book." We may concede to Mr. Sitwell his point of the relationship between the minor arts of decorative wallpaper and printing generally. But surely this high level of taste was reached in all the arts, including architecture itself, at that time. And when architecture itself is changing in a powerful and positive manner, as it is to-day, it is certain that the ideas which are stimulating that change will give to the minor arts, including wallpaper, a new lease of life.



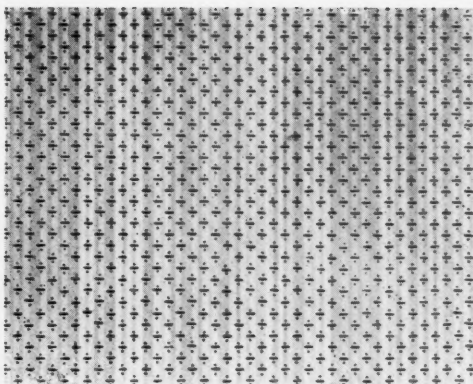




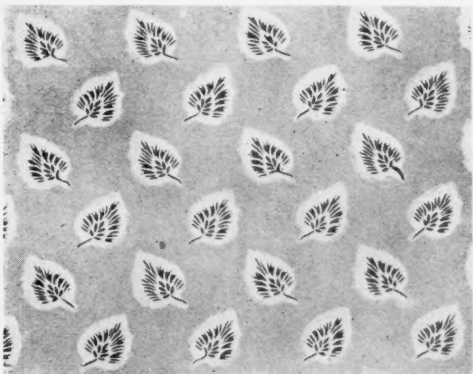




**71** A view of two of the screens showing a range of striped papers actually on the market in 1939 and again to be produced as soon as the Paper Control permits. They are contemporary in character and have an almost unlimited colour range. Judging by the comments from many architects, who visited the exhibition and saw these papers for the first time, there should be a good demand for papers of this type.



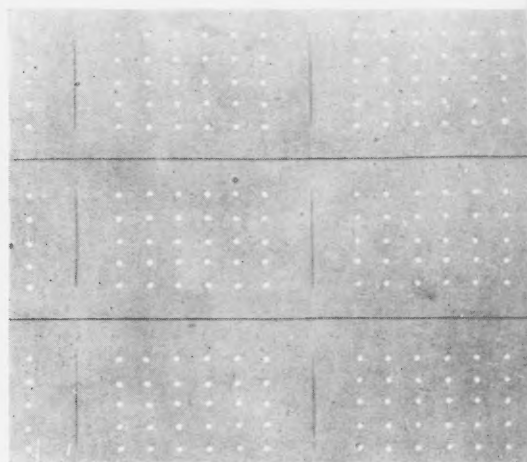
**72** This and the following are wall-papers which will again be available after the war. The stripes are pale grey and white, and relief is given by the greenish-grey dashes and dots. In the photographs these are a good deal more prominent than in the actual paper.



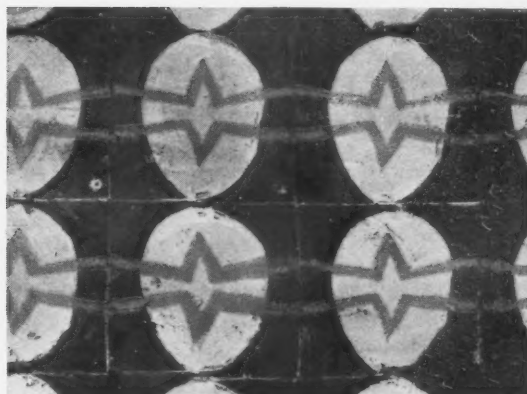
**73** One of the very few satisfactory foliage designs in existence in British wallpaper. The leaves are pale grey on white and the background is a pale sky blue. This as well as the previous paper are shown approximately half original size.



**74** Now we leave existing papers and come to the new designs. This has a ground of tones of buff with large white herringbone patterns and occasional smaller coral pink ones with vertical lines and dots of bright yellow. Illustrated about half original size. (Marian Mahler).

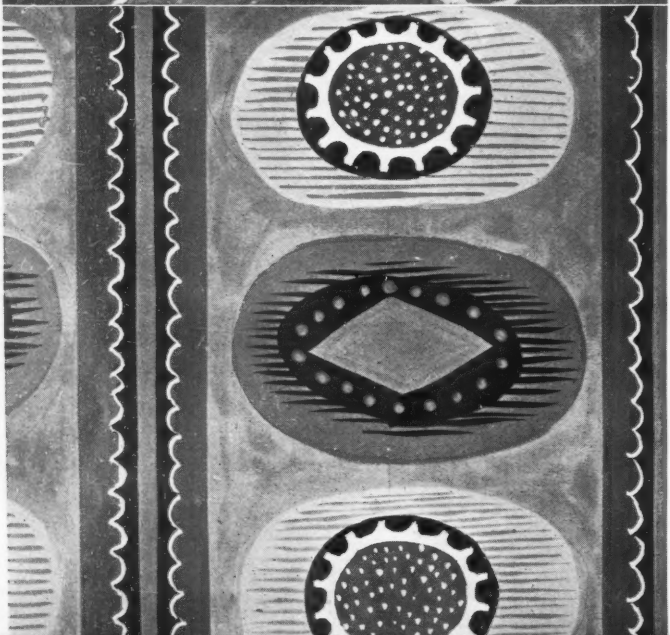
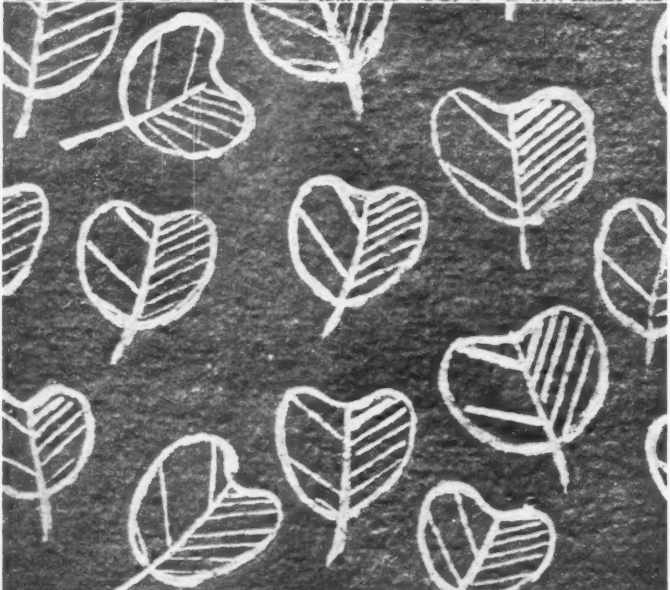
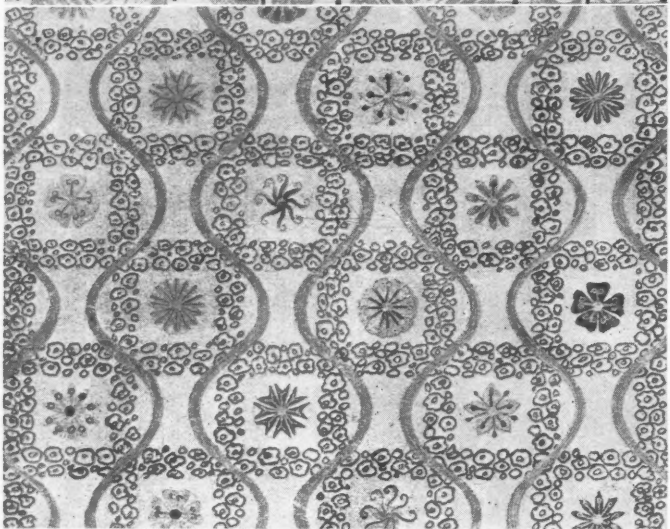
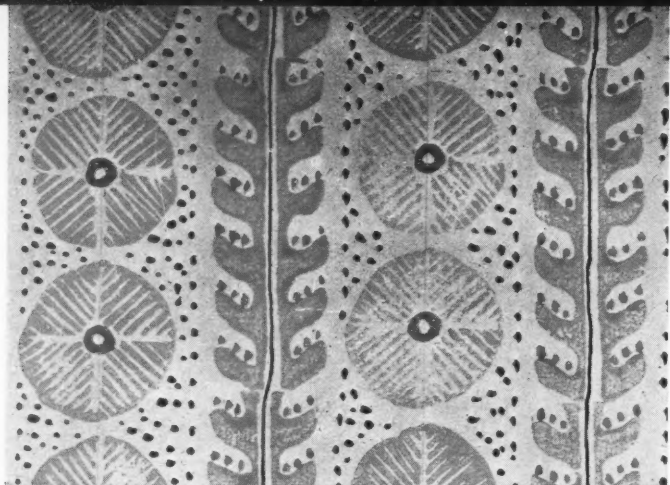


**75** This spot design is of particular interest, as it is one of the very few if not the only spot paper either in existence or among the new designs which does not have a diagonal arrangement. The spots are only on vertical and horizontal lines. Like most of these new designs it requires some skill from the paper-hanger, but most paper-hangers would probably enjoy the extra skill required. The spots are white on a greenish-grey ground with darker grey fine vertical lines and bright coral red horizontal lines. About half original size. (Lucienne Conradi).



**76** Here we are getting away from the most elementary motifs. Freely drawn grey lines with sharp angles on a dazzling lemon yellow ground. The photo makes the ground appear much too dark. The egg-shaped surfaces are white. The reproduction is again about half original size. (Graham Sutherland).





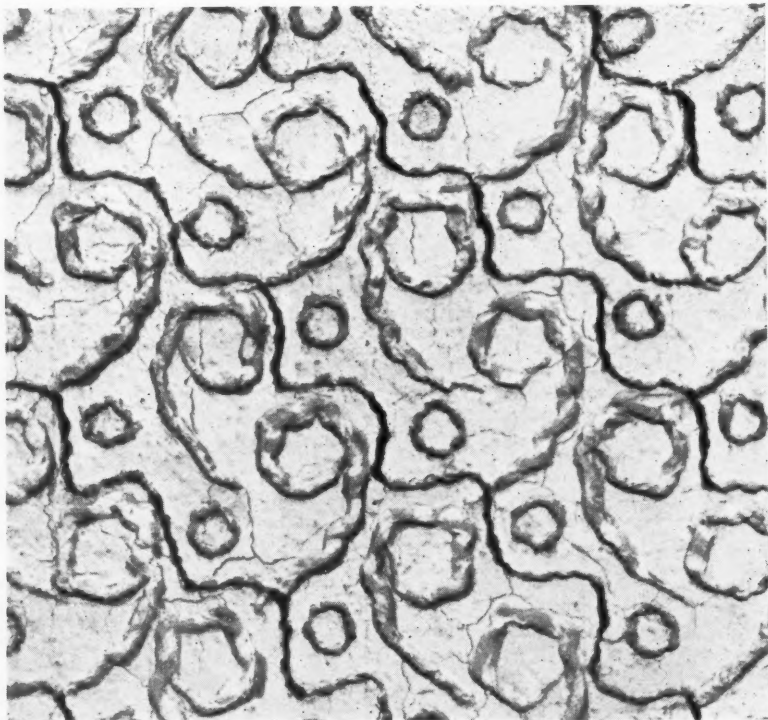
**77** The ground is white. The vertical stripes are made up of a black line and lime green formalized leaves with coral pink dots. Between are pale grey circular motifs with coral pink centres and surrounded by black dots. (Clifford and Rosemary Ellis).

**78** A delicate small-scale design with white ground, pink and pale grey wavy lines, and squares beneath which are formed by curly darker grey lines. The motifs inside the squares are cream, grey and pink. The general effect is a very pale pinkish grey, quiet and restful. (Betty Tanner).

**79** White leaves on a pale yellowish beige ground. An easy design for the paper-hanger to handle and yet, owing to the irregular spacing of the leaves, one that solves the problem of the all-over pattern which does not force one to start counting the patterns, as so many papers do. (Jacqueline Groag).

**80** There are few bold patterns amongst the new designs, although designers must feel what a welcome change they would be from the muzzy wallpapers to which we have all become so accustomed. Here the colours are strong, but subtle, rusty pinks, lemon yellows, whites and greys. In the original the contrasts are not quite so marked as in the photograph. (Stephen Russ).

**81** This is one of a series of designs for embossed papers done by a talented young weaver. Many of them, when made up in paper, would give an impression of actual woven cloth, and though excellent as designs for textiles, are questionable from the point of view of wallpaper design. Two, however, are made from bits of yarn applied to the background in many lines to give a low relief. The results are excellent new textural effects without any allusion to woven fabrics. The one reproduced here, certainly one of the best in the whole show, has a white ground with raised ribs of primrose yellow, pale blue and bright green. In the original the diagonal ribs are not nearly as strongly marked as they seem to be. (Joy Jarvis).



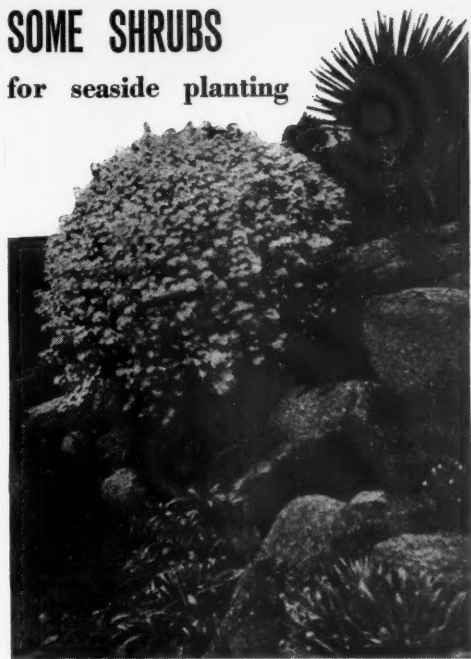
**DESIGN  
REVIEW**

next instalment

printed textiles

## SOME SHRUBS

for seaside planting



By W. ARNOLD FORSTER

HAVE you ever considered the dreariness of aspect of many of our windswept seaside towns in the south-west? Look at Bude, for instance, or the seaward side of Newquay; look at that lamentably missed opportunity, Perranporth. Why are these places so lacking in grace, in the appearance of holiday spirit, and in shelter from the constant sea wind? I will not here discuss what part has been played by lack of planning, lack of public control over the use of land, failure to employ competent architects, the deterioration of building technique, the abnormal difficulties of weatherproofing buildings against seaside wind and wet, and the current lack of imagination about the provision of public amenities in the English climate. I am here concerned only with one point—the lack of living green. These places are treeless, almost shrubless. One of the chief reasons why they look so stony, so lacking in snugness, is that almost no good planting has been done.

Now this failure was to some extent unavoidable, excusable, twenty years ago. A few plants, such as *Escallonia macrantha*, *Euonymus japonicus*, *Veronica "Blue Gem"* and *Griselinia littoralis* were known to be able to stand a lot of sea wind in a fairly mild climate; but the range was still very narrow, and even these few plants were far too little used. My belief is that the list of wind-hardy plants suitable for such sites can now be considerably enlarged, and that ample provision for planting should be made in post-war building schemes for such positions.

Here is a short list of plants recommended for this purpose. I am not concerned here with a gardener's opportunities, but rather with the architect's problem of providing a furniture of living green for buildings

in situations exposed to the severest sea wind.

The plants here recommended have been tested by myself and others over a sufficiently long term of years, and in conditions of extraordinary severity. I may mention that my own garden is probably the most exposed in Britain, being over 600 feet up on open moorland on the North Cornish coast not far from Land's End, three-quarters of a mile from the sea. The illustrations to this article have all been photographed on this site in which common hawthorn is stunted into low flamelike shapes, and where even ash and sycamore cannot thrive.

**Senecio rotundifolius.** Look first at the bushes illustrated at the foot of the previous column. These are a shrubby groundsel from New Zealand, *Senecio rotundifolius*. The plants illustrated are about eight years old, and will get twice as big in time. They are planted in shallow soil amongst rocks, 600 feet above the sea, facing due north, in a position where they have to stand much draught and the full force of Atlantic gales. No native bush could survive such an ordeal. But here are these plants still perfectly compact and undistorted in shape. Their leaves, large, round and evergreen, are as thick and tough as leather, and the undersides are washed with shining silver-brown. Against blue sky the bushes often stand out pale, in a silver gilt colour that intensifies the blue. The plant has no beauty of flower, but its leaf has a large simplicity of pattern, and its shape has a rounded formality which makes it peculiarly suitable, I think, for formal use in relation to buildings. I should like to see this plant used in building schemes in mild wind-swept places such as Newlyn, Sennen, Perranuthnoe, Newquay and Bude. Its rounded shapes would surely be appropriate in a setting of modern architecture; they would make excellent uprights beside broad steps leading down to an esplanade, or marking the length of a terrace. The plant is hardy enough for seaside gardens in the milder counties, and came through the great wind-frost of December, 1938, without substantial damage. It is easily propagated from cuttings, and moves perfectly, even when fairly large. I hope nurseries in the south-west will feel encouraged to grow a stock of it 2 or 3 feet high.

**Senecio eleagnifolius V. Buchanani.** This is very similar to *S. rotundifolius*, but dwarfer. The bush when fully grown is broader than it is high, whereas a bush of *rotundifolius* becomes a sphere. The leaf of *Buchanani* is rather darker and is beautifully veined. The plant is still very scarce in commerce, if indeed it is obtainable; but it should be extensively propagated, since it can be most useful in the same sort of setting as *rotundifolius*. The two go perfectly together.

**Olearia albida.** I come now to a plant much better known, though still not used nearly enough in windy places. *Olearia albida* is the plant which is often listed in catalogues as *O. oleifolia*, but *albida* is the correct name. It makes a bush about 8 feet high, if grown in full exposure; it has evergreen leaves, grey-green, and very profuse heads of white flower in August, faintly but very pleasantly scented, especially when the air is damp. The flowers' whiteness tarnishes quickly, but the off-white colour is not, I think, unpleasant; and the fluffy seeds like pale amber velvet have their attraction. The plant can stand the most severe of Atlantic gales without even a stake to anchor it. All that it needs is a drastic pruning once in every eight years or so. The photograph on the right gives an idea of its floweriness when used as a wind-break in a draughty spot between big rocks.

**Olearia avicenniaefolia.** This is similar to *O. albida*, but not so woody a bush. It stands quite as much wind, and flowers a little later. It is useful for making rounded masses of grey-green in full exposure. Like some others of its tribe, it has a habit of dying back suddenly; a whole branch withers, but the bush survives.

**Olearia macrodonta.** This well-known plant can be very useful and decorative; but perhaps it is not quite so suitable as the others for formal surroundings, since it grows very fast and is apt to get lanky unless carefully and drastically pruned. It has leaves like those of a holly, grey-green above and silvered underneath. The flowers are large heads of white in midsummer. There are several forms of the plant, the best being the large-leaved one. There is also a very promising hybrid, "Rowallane hybrid."

*Macrodonta* is a very good plant for making a hedge quickly in a windy place, reaching about 10 feet. If allowed to grow to its full height in such conditions, there will be some beauty in its sinuous, silvery trunks, if these are stripped of loose bark. Its seeds, after flowering, cover the bush with light brown fur and the plant is aromatic at flowering time.

**Olearia Traversii.** This is a tree, reaching 20 or 30 feet. The picture on the next page shows it growing on a Cornish moor in full exposure, about twenty years old. Note the bareness of the moor in the background of the illustration; no native plant taller than dwarf gorse manages to live beyond the low wall which encloses these imported plants from far-away windy New Zealand. This *Olearia* has no beauty of flower, but it has much distinction of leaf, for the underside is brilliantly white, so that the tree flashes like a silver poplar when the wind takes it. It grows extraordinarily fast, making a hedge 6 feet high in two or three years from cuttings. But it has the defects of its qualities; it is very apt to blow over unless drastically pruned when young. Its head must be cut off two or three times—a mutilation which may be disheartening to the impatient gardener, but which is indispensable if the tree is to become established in a very exposed place.

There are a good many other *Olearias* which lend themselves to use in formal surroundings in windy places, such as the rare hybrid *O. lacunosa X ilicifolia*.

I will only deal with one of them here. This is *Olearia scillonensis*, which is believed to be a hybrid between *O. stellulata* and *O. lyrata*. It originated by chance at Treco Abbey in the Scilly Isles and has lately been named by the owner of that wonderful garden, Major Dorrien Smith, V.M.H. It is, I consider, far the most effective of the white flowering daisy bushes—much better than the ordinary *O. stellulata*. As may be judged from the photo the whole bush is covered with flower and it keeps a good rounded shape even in a fairly exposed site. This plant flowers in May. It has pleasant grey-green leaves, grows fast and is very readily propagated. It can be very useful where a cold white flower is in place. The flowers have a daisy-like fragrance, faint but pleasant.

Among the Veronicas, two are very common, namely the excellent hybrid "Blue Gem," and the white one, *Traversii*. I have lately found one of which I do not know the proper name, but which I recommend here. It is probably a hybrid of *V. Dieffenbachii* and has thick greyish-green leaves and a profusion of four-inch spikes of pure white flowers with brown and purple anthers. It grows in extremely windy sites, making good rounded shapes; it grows fast and it stands drought much better than "Blue Gem." The photo shows this plant growing on top of a rough hedge beside a cottage on the North Cornish coast. I will call it provisionally *Veronica "Marazion White."*

Many other Veronicas should be tested; we are very far, even now, from having learned fully what the mountains and islands of New Zealand have to offer in the way of veronicas, *Olearias* and other plants for windy gardens in the milder parts of this country. Many of the veronicas hitherto grown here are too tender to withstand so abnormal a frost as that of December, 1938, but there are some species, especially mountain species, which should be able to withstand any such ordeal. And the veronicas, with their tidy design, are peculiarly suitable for formal planting.



Olearia Albida



Veronica Macrocarpa



Senecio Rotundifolius

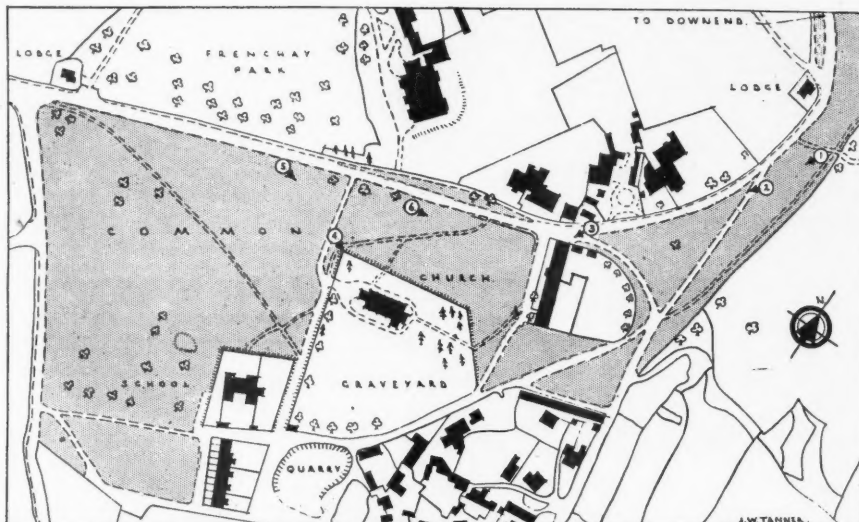


Senecio Rotundifolius, and—top photo—Olearia Scillonensis, probably a hybrid of Olearia Stellulata and Lyrata



## Frenchay Common or workaday sharawadgi

The photographs were taken by Dell & Wainwright, the plan was drawn by Mr. J. W. Tanner. More information on Frenchay can be found in the late C. H. B. Elliott's Winterbourne, Bristol (1936).



*Eucalyptus coccifera*, Tasmanian form. With some hesitation I add to this list this beautiful eucalypt. It is so beautiful in blue-green leaf colour and in its showering habit. I like, too, its smooth bark, and its milk-white fuzz of flower. It is almost the only species of this great genus, amongst the considerable number which have been tried in this country, which has proved reliably hardy in mild gardens: in Cornwall it came through the great frost of 1938 when nearly all other eucalypts were killed. Try planting it near a building which has a large plain wall washed pinkish cream; and presently, when it is 15 feet high or so, get one of the cunning photographers to illustrate your building for this REVIEW, with the pattern of flickering leaf-shadows on the wall and the sky darkly blue.

I do not suggest that the plants I have mentioned are in the very first rank for decorative value. But I do say that they have all their characteristic beauty and a trimness that makes them suitable for association with architecture. I say too, with absolute confidence, that they will grow, given reasonable care, in even the windiest exposure in such a climate as that of the south-west coast. Look again at the photographs. The sea which makes their horizon is the Atlantic and there is nothing between those bushes and New York. And think again of the bleakness of those Cornish holiday towns. Would it not be a crime, in new building on such sites, to repeat the former error of omitting to provide for ample planting? Opportunity will come after the war; and here, so soon as stocks can be raised, are some of the plants that can well be used.

"Their greatest reach of imagination is employed in contriving figures where the beauty shall be great, and strike the eye, but without any order or disposition of parts, that shall be commonly or easily observed, . . . and where they find it . . . they say the Sharawadgi is fine or is admirable, or any such expression of esteem." Sir William Temple is writing of the Chinese, but every word of what he says could equally well be applied to the subtle art of conscious or unconscious visual planning in our own country between 1720 and 1820. It is, alas, a lost art now, and one that must be recovered if the reconstructed England of after the war is not to be a dead place to live in—whether it be killed by academic or by Utopian specifics.

Frenchay Common, near Bristol, is one of hundreds of Georgian commons. It was never planned; size and disposition of houses were caused by conditions of property, very old, one can assume, and quite accidental. The fact that the aesthetic outcome of this process of growth is so curiously attractive, at least to the English eye, is equally accidental. But it is no less real for that reason.

It can be studied by the contemporary planner in the spirit in which he would study a specially happy configuration of, say, hills, a river and groups of trees—simply as a study in pattern. That, in addition, it holds a message to those watchful for the preservation of Britain's beauty spots need hardly be added. Georgian building does not fall under our outdated scheduling system. Of individual houses there may indeed be so many that to protect all of them would mean paralysing all planning. But the value of a Georgian ensemble ought to be considered not only on the merit of its individual parts but also on those of composition. In the case of squares that has gradually become an accepted principle. Knock down one house and replace it by a tall office building, and the whole square is valueless. That the same applies to the loose grouping of a Common cannot be said too emphatically. Knock down one tree and everything may change its significance. This subtle correlation between objects, architectural and otherwise, on an English Common is indicated on this and the following pages by means of a conducted tour.



1 The Common is approached from the north, that is from Downend. Past one of the lodges of the Frenchay Park Estate—the other lodge lies away in the west, near the main road—we get a first glance of the cluster of houses connecting the outer with the inner Common. The picture is dominated by a magnificent sycamore. The tree sets the scale. Houses—all of approximately the same height—keep to about two-fifths of the height of the tree. The church spire to the left, instinctively assumed to be taller than trees, gives a feeling of distance to come, as one approaches the houses and a gap between them hardly yet recognisable. Note the contrasts in texture (from right to left) of hedge, stone wall, brick wall and iron fence of the four nearest houses. Note also the outlandish cedar and cypress trees, young and sheltered in the first garden.



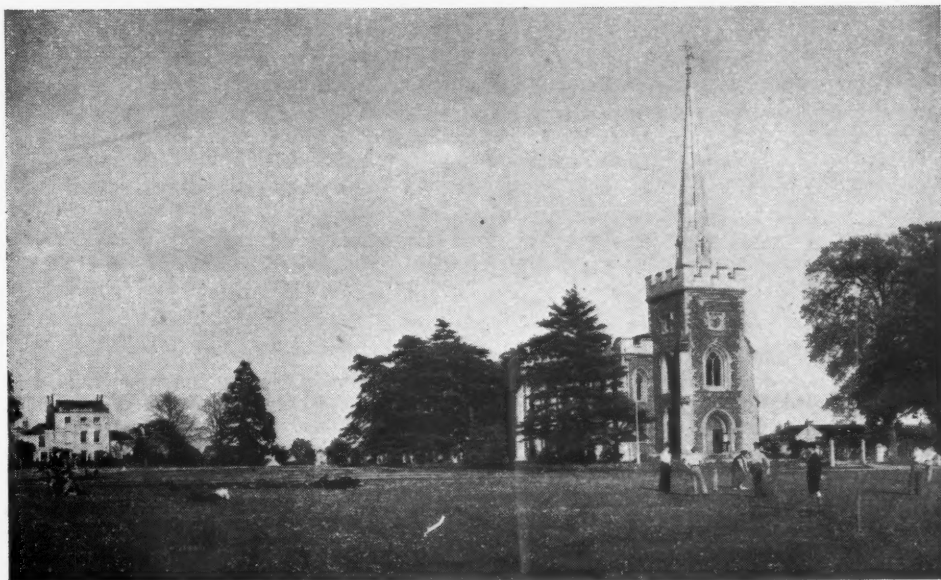
2 Now we approach this same group of houses. The elements of the composition are now the rectangle of walls as a background to the two sycamores—there turn out to be two, not one. The main house, "Frenchay House," with its broad bay window, is all covered with ivy, dark against the cream front on the right and the fawn pedimented front on the left. The iron fence, with its wooden boarding behind, adds an oddly modern note. This whole set of façades lies on the bend of the road. Following it we are drawn towards the dark hollow on the left, the chasm through which we have to pass if we want to reach the church and the open common beyond.



3 This is the dramatic climax of the tour. After the generous width of the approach we are now between walls on the right from which we cannot step back far enough to see that the houses behind them are as friendly as the ones enjoyed before, and a bare stone wall on the left over which tower two storeys of equally bare north wall. The wall below belongs to the outbuildings and is of local stone, the house wall is plastered, and fortunately the plaster is flaking off nicely. The elegant coping could not be better. Two curves are just what is needed above the three roofs of divers shape below. Whoever put that neo-Gothic postern gate into the stone wall must have been a person of great instinctive sensibility. It is in exactly the right mood.



4 With the church we reach our natural goal—conventionally speaking a disappointing one. The building is indifferent Gothic Revival of 1832-34. But for the Student of Sharawadgi it provides with its trees a note of melodrama that is not at all unacceptable, and it is magnificently sited so that it accentuates the total extent of the Common—neither pat in the middle, nor pushed away so as to become part of, as it were, the outer walls of the Common. The churchyard is on the south, with the school building jutting forward into the width of the large west clearing. North of the church the Common is much narrower—transition from the chasm on the one side to the wide expanse of grass on the other.



5 The wisdom of this placing of the church can only be appreciated if we now step back from its front and try to see it in relation to Common and surrounding houses. Where we stand, we have Frenchay Park with its old trees on our north and the Common at its widest on our south. The church truly dominates now; for the cottages beyond the churchyard are very low, and the higher houses of that terrace which ended so abruptly on one side of our chasm are too distant to spoil the scale of tower and spire. What luck too that the trees, an exciting combination of species with cedars on the left and a magnificent tulip-tree on the right of the church, don't reach higher than the crenellations and leave the spire to shoot up unimpeded. The scale of the panorama thus revealed is tremendous.



6 Now we are getting ready to return. There is not much of interest further west or south; and Frenchay Park lies back behind its wall. As the picture closes up again, the church disappears, and once more the chief elements are one tall tree—a Wellingtonia this time, some lower silver birches and plain Georgian houses of varying height. Don't expect any of the evenness of a set of false teeth in the architecture around an English Common. Starting from the left you get: high, low, up, down again, up again, low, low, a gap, low again and the Wellingtonia as the final accent—the whole tied together by the lawn in front, and custom-ry rightness of proportions. And these very proportions in their elementary application to flat wall and sharply-cut window make us forget in the end that we are looking at houses. As we step back and sun or mist envelops the distant string of buildings and trees, our last impression remains, one of cube and cone, as if we were looking at a mantelshelf with assorted *objets trouvés*.

## BOOKS

### Trees and Timbers

BRITISH WOODLAND TREES. By H. L. Edlin. Batsford. 12s. 6d.

TREES play a large part in modern architecture, and will play an even greater part in modern town planning; and yet the æsthetic of trees in landscape gardening urgently needs revaluation in the light of modern design. It was from this point of view that I had specially been looking forward to a new book on trees, brought out under the imprint of a publishing house of such a strong architectural tradition as Batsford's. However, æsthetics are given very little space in this book. It is chiefly aimed at "foresters, woodmen, forestry students, field naturalists and the great

lay public"; and where æsthetic argument does come in, in the horrid guise of "amenity," the divergence of opinion between foresters and gardeners (on what is "a fine stand of timber," for example) is apparent.

Nevertheless, this is a most useful and attractive book. It gives a thorough, scientific and popular account of two hundred species of trees, including all the native trees, all commercially planted trees, and the principal park and garden trees of Britain. These descriptions, which cover some 130 pages, are very full and concise, and contain notes on cultivation and economic value. They have the slight disadvantage of being in chapter form: the book would have been more useful as a work of reference if the data common to all trees—habitat, range, height, leaves, flowers, fruit and so on—were arranged under such sub-headings and in the same order for each tree. About twenty pages of very interesting information

on the botany, ecology, economic use and general study of trees, which one might have expected to form an introduction, are interspersed instead among the descriptive chapters.

There are 32 plates of foliage, flowers and fruit by John Miller from the 1776 edition of John Evelyn's *Sylva*; even in the small monochrome reproductions, these accurate drawings to a uniform scale remind one how lovely good scientific illustrations can be. There is also a large number of good photographs. Those which show trees in their landscape setting are especially interesting; but even the best photographs of individual trees mean little unless they are reproduced to a huge size, and few of the studies of flowers and fruit can bear comparison with Miller's drawings.

The book ends with brief reference lists—rather meagre from the landscape architect's point of view—of trees for various sites and purposes, and an appendix of Artificial Keys for identifica-



tion. Such keys are valuable to the beginner, but one misses a table of families and genera: tree form is after all an arbitrary grouping distinct from botanical classification—many families of plants have both tree and herbaceous forms—and a generic table would have been useful to show the relationship of trees to allied herbaceous plants and shrubs.

PETER SHEPHEARD

WORLD TIMBERS (Volume I). Published by the Timber Development Association.

**W**ARTIME conditions have necessitated imports of timber from entirely new sources, and consequently, users of timber are faced with the problem of dealing with species which are little known in this country. South America, principally Brazil, is sending us wood with strange and romantic names, such as Angico, Camela, Freijo, Jequitiba, Louro Vermelho, Peroba, etc. It is principally for this reason that the T.D.A. has issued a series of leaflets listing fifty main species of timber, although not all of these are strange or unknown to us.

These leaflets are collected in an attractive folder, filed in alphabetical order, with an index listing alternative names for each species, with some additional notes on seasoning, working qualities and uses, as well as sources of supply. The leaflets are well written, and the usual comparison with English oak will give the layman, at a glance, a fair idea of the characteristics of the wood in question.

It has been suggested by joinery manufacturers that some further information on seasoning would have been advantageous. At the same time these leaflets are regarded as indispensable by most users of timber, and their publication can be said to be most timely. It is indeed probable that architects will be faced with similar problems as soon as timber for buildings, both structurally and decoratively, can be said to be in free supply.

The T.D.A. are fortunate in having the services of two such outstanding experts as Mr. Bolton and Mr. Jay on matters relating to the properties of timber. However, when it comes to structure and buildings, the T.D.A. have not, so far, been able to assist or advise us as much as we could wish. There is a real need for a technical publication on the structural application of timber, bearing in mind the necessity for timber economy. Such a publication, especially if examples of prefabrication and site fabrication were shown, would be of tremendous interest to the whole architectural profession, and it could serve as a standard textbook in architectural schools, thereby contributing materially to the creation of a sound post-war building economy.

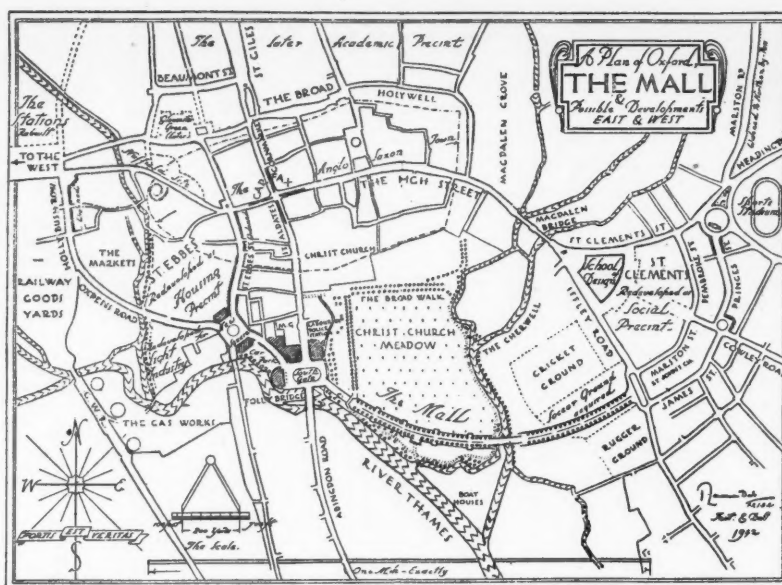
C. S. MARDALL

### Christ Church Mall

TOWARDS A PLAN FOR OXFORD CITY. By Lawrence Dale. Faber & Faber. 6s. net.

**O**XFORD, in the view of the architect-author of a pamphlet published in 1941, and called *Christ Church Mall: A Diversion*, is not only a University cut in pieces by town traffic, but also a town split into two disconnected halves by a University. In other words the main link between industrial East Oxford and the railway stations on the west is the famous High Street and the no less infamous crossing at Carfax. To provide another and a more efficient link, and to create at the same time opportunities for intelligent redevelopment at St. Clements on one side and St. Ebbes on the other, Mr. Lawrence Dale proposed a curved, slightly elevated, tree-lined boulevard, skirting Christ Church Meadow, and cutting it off from the river and the boathouses immediately to the south. This road he christened the Mall.

Christ Church Mall is again the central theme of the author's plan for Oxford City. It is also the peg on which he hangs a number of historical and æsthetic judgments and comments; some of which are curious, some profound, and some of a paradoxical and punning humour, reminiscent of a Shakespearean jester. To one accustomed to the textbook jargon used by planners, this comes as a refreshing change; for instead of formulating a set of abstract principles and then proceeding to



Mr. Dale's scheme for re-planning the centre of Oxford. His much-debated suggestion of a wide avenue between Christ Church Meadow and the River is discussed on this page in a review of his most recent book.

find a few examples to illustrate them, the book sets out one concrete planning proposal and then summons up every kind of maxim and metaphor to support and embroider it. The reader to whom the proposal commends itself is likely to be amused and interested by these embroideries; the reader who is not convinced will find them an added cause of irritation. The latter will no doubt apply to certain members of Christ Church, who regard the idea as little short of sacrilege.

In a case like this one cannot sit indefinitely on the balustrade; even when invited to do so by the Oxford Preservation Trust. The Trust's Committee on Planning and Reconstruction, reporting in 1942, were of the opinion that—

"this is not the time when a conclusion can be reached on the question of the Christ Church Mall . . ." "if after the war another new bridge were built over the Cherwell and a main road carried across Christ Church Meadow, the heavy expenditure involved, and the injury done to the quiet and seclusion of the Meadow, would be found by experience to have been unnecessary. The cost would prove not to have been justified by the amount of traffic that was in fact making use of it. And later generations would say that it was a pity that the Oxford of the nineteen-forties had not waited a little to see whether, after all, the need for it really existed."

In short, the counter-argument is against taking the risk of a problematical gain in amenity, until it is proved that there is, first of all, an overwhelming need to be met, and secondly, no alternative means of meeting it, such as the completion of the by-pass ring roads or the redevelopment of Cowley as a self-sufficient centre of activity.

This may well be the statesmanlike attitude; and it is entitled to its pedestal. But it is based on two assumptions that are at least doubtful, if not unstable. One is that the Mall and the Meadow are to some degree exclusive: that one cannot have the former save at the expense of the latter. The other is that a nodal point such as Carfax can be made less attractive to traffic by the creation of other nodal points, and by external ring roads. The delusion of the by-pass is one from which the experience of the decade before the war should have saved us. Yet it persists. The first suggestion in nearly every urban re-planning scheme is to throw a girder round the town, linking up the radial roads and making a green belt yet more difficult to attain. Canterbury aims at relieving the congestion at its centre and plans a complete ring road outside the town. It is undeniable that some traffic will use the ring road; but traffic is continuously on the increase and anyone motoring from Dover to London is more

likely to welcome a sight of Canterbury Cathedral (and perhaps the chance of a cup of tea) than deliberately to avoid it. The City of London has recently put out some very costly proposals for a ring road around the City, at least half of which does not serve the City directly at all. Yet 90 per cent. of traffic there either needs or chooses to go into or through the City; and what is needed is a feeder road, giving additional freedom of movement and alternative circulation, rather than a by-pass.

So with Oxford. The completion of the Northern and Southern By-pass Roads may serve a certain amount of industrial traffic that finds them more direct than the route through the University precinct; but he would be a fool who relied on their relieving in any material respect the High Street, Holywell and Carfax. Mr. Dale comments:

"There is, of course, need for main trunk roads that lead directly from town to town, without passing through them—roads built to go somewhere. To build roads to avoid going somewhere is simply not sensible."

The other assumption—the value of the proposed Mall as an architectural asset in itself—is not dealt with quite so convincingly in the book. The idea achieves literary expression, but not graphic expression; as anyone turning up the author's water-colour drawing reproduced as Illustration VIII, will see for himself. In fact it looks like an error of taste to reproduce this kind of illustration at all, in company with the superb drawing by William Turner of Cornmarket Street in 1840, and his equally skilful water-colour of St. Giles in 1812. It would have been better to leave the description of the possibilities of the Mall to a diagrammatic plan and a specification in words.

Nevertheless, the architectural idea behind the writing is a thoughtful, a courageous and a practicable one. It needs skilful study by someone who knows how to survey the lie of the land, and to create, out of a superb natural setting, a work of art. It seems doubtful whether Oxford will know how to set about such a problem, or to bring it through its political and administrative stages to the point at which the designer—engineer or architect—can be given a great opportunity to exercise skill and imagination. In any case, little can happen for three or four years at least. Road repairs, and housing and other prior public works, will postpone the layout of new roads for at least as long as that.

Meanwhile, the ideas behind Mr. Dale's book may germinate and take root, perhaps among the alumni, or the City Council, or even the Ministry of Town and Country Planning. So that one day it may even be possible to stroll up the High, and appreciate some of its architecture.

STANISLAS T. SCOTT

# ANTHOLOGY

## Industry and Genius of Birmingham

O Baskerville ! in whom, tho' rare, unite  
The spirit of industry, and eke the ray  
Of bright inventive genius ; while I write  
Do thou with candour listen to the lay,  
Which to fair Birmingham the muse shall pay ;  
Masking beneath a fable's thin disguise  
The virtues its inhabitants display ;  
Those virtues, whence their fame, their riches  
rise,  
Their nice mechanick arts, their various  
merchandise.

On Avon's winding bank, with flowers besprent,  
Whilome y dwelt a thrifty sober swaine ;  
On care and labour aye was he intent,  
And lowing herds and flocks upon the plain,  
And plenteous crops rewarded well his pain.  
Cheap his attire, and frugal were his meals,  
His bags were swell'd with no dishonest gain ;  
A hard, rough hand his source of wealth reveals,  
No idle hour he knows, no weariness he feels.

Hight Industry was he, of parents poor ;  
But soon by labour he removed had  
Their poverty, and from his well-got store,  
Their aged limbs with decency y clad.  
Yet now, alas, their bosoms waxen sad,  
That he, their only child, no wife essays,  
No little grandlings brought, their hearts to glad  
With idle parlance, and with childish plays  
To cheer, and lengthen out the evening of their  
days.

But near at hand, in bower of jessamy  
And roses, nature's beauties mix'd with art,  
A maiden dwelt, so fair that only she  
Was theme of every tongue, and every heart :  
Yet few to gain her heart mought boast desert,

Sith, to her beauty join'd, was clearly seen  
A not so bright, a mind with every part  
Of science so illum'd, that well I ween,  
Her meed in ancient Greece had bin the  
muse's queen.

All in the clear conception of her mind  
The fairest forms of things depainted were ;  
And the least shade of difference she would find  
'Twixt every object brought into compare.  
Grace still distinguish'd her productions rare  
From those of common artists. Her nice hand  
Obedient was, to execute with care  
And elegance, her fancy's least command :  
Genie y clept she was, admir'd by all the land.

It chanc'd, as on a day the careful wight,  
On hill and dale, in field and meadow, sought  
A wandering ewe, stray'd from his flock by night,  
That fortune to her bower his footsteps brought:  
He gaz'd, admir'd, and soon her beauty wrought  
His heart to love ; he woo'd the peerless maid,  
And long with humble zeal her smile besought,  
The blush of yielding modesty betray'd  
At length her vanquish'd heart, and mutual love  
display'd.

This happy union soon produc'd a race  
Of docile sons, in whom the mother's mind,  
Inventive wit, and all-adorning grace,  
Shone with the father's perseverance join'd.  
And now, to social amity inclin'd,  
A tradeful town they build, hight Birmingham,  
Where still their busy offspring dwell combin'd,  
Whose useful thewes, and matchless arts  
proclaim,  
To all th' admiring world, from what rare stock  
they came.

INDUSTRY AND GENIUS (*The Origin of Birmingham.  
A Fable, attempted in the manner of Spenser, 1751*)

## MARGINALIA

### This Month's Anthology

This anonymous poem is bound in with the British Museum copy of the 1809 edition of W. Hutton's *History of Birmingham*. It is dedicated to John Baskerville, the great Birmingham printer (and one of the greatest type designers of all time) who had set up his printing press just one year before its publication in 1751.

### Acknowledgment

The photographs to *Forbidden City* were looked up for the author by the British Embassy, Baghdad. They are reproduced by the courtesy of the O.C. Royal Iraqi Air Force and the Iraqi Government Department of Antiquities.

### The Wolverton Plan

Mr. G. A. Jellicoe's plan for the Wolverton Urban Council was recently exhibited in London. It is an uncommonly stimulating solution to an uncommonly interesting problem: planning for a small area and a small population—only about 15,000—and

for a sympathetic and enterprising council. The area comprises Wolverton, a railway town, designed on a grid system about the middle of the nineteenth century for the L.M.S., and Stony Stratford, an exquisite little country town of old traditions. Mr. Jellicoe has, in his report, done justice to the different requirements and development needs of both communities, and has, moreover, with his great care for nature and human nature patiently worked out his plan right down to almost every tree and shrub in every playground. There is hope that the report will be published. It will then have to be discussed in more detail.

### Builders of Britain

Here is a list, probably not complete, of consultant architects on the re-planning of British cities: Sir Patrick Abercrombie is advising on London, Plymouth, Clydebank, Hull, Bath and the Bournemouth area. In most cases he is associated with a municipal official, either the architect or the engineer. Norwich is being replanned by Mr.

C. H. James and Mr. S. Rowland Pierce, Coventry is under Mr. D. E. E. Gibson, the City Architect, Bristol under the City Engineer and the City Architect, Mr. J. Nelson Meredith. Likewise Swansea is under the Borough Surveyor, the Borough Estate Agent and the Borough Architect, Mr. E. E. Morgan. For rebuilding Southampton, Mr. Hubert Bennett has been specially appointed Borough Architect. The Exeter Corporation have recently appointed Mr. Thomas Sharp as town planning adviser. Mr. Sharp's plan for Durham has already been published (*The Architectural Press*, 1944). The Merseyside Report has also appeared (Messrs. C. H. James and Langstreth Thompson). For Canterbury Mr. Charles Holden is co-operating with the City Surveyor.

### From the Reconstruction Front

The United States are sending over 30,000 prefabricated houses. The first has been put up at the Building Research Station at Garston. It is a nice-looking job, which puts to shame the British

Aluminium house illustrated last month. Details of it and some criticism will be found in *The Architects' Journal* for May 10.

Meanwhile the Government, through the Minister of Works, has placed an order for 50,000 aluminium houses. Will they really be of that unnecessarily uninspired design?

30,000 and 50,000 are goodly figures, especially if one considers the fact that by the middle of May London possessed a total of 370 temporary houses ready for occupation. 1,027 more were in course of erection. In the provinces 1,484 were building.

### Controller of Building in Germany

Mr. Hinchcliffe Davies, of Liverpool, is going to Germany with the Control Council to control building work in the British Occupation zone. He has been with the Ministry of Works for the last few years on problems of building allocation.

### M. H. Baillie Scott

Except for a personal notice in the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* and a page in *The Studio* the death seems to have been left all but unmentioned of M. H. Baillie Scott, the last survivor of the great British pioneers of Art Nouveau and the twentieth century. Mackintosh, the youngest of them, died first in 1933, then Voysey in 1940, Mackmurdo in 1941, and now at the age of eighty, Baillie Scott. His first building ever illustrated (*Building News*, December 4, 1891), a proposed house on the Isle of Man, was still of a conventional, homely, half-timbered kind. Later he built much in the Isle, and much abroad—as far as America and Roumania. His most interesting foreign job was some furnishing for the Grand Duke of Hesse at Darmstadt. He threw a solid bridge there between Art Nouveau in Britain and Germany. His own style had reached maturity by the mid-nineties. It was at that time that he began to write illustrated articles in *The Studio* (V, 1895; VI, 1895; IX, 1897; X, 1897; XII, 1898; XIV, 1898). They were chiefly on furniture and interior decoration, and in this perhaps the future will find his real forte, although some of his houses have the same charm, ease and generous development in their exteriors as they have inside. His sense of ornament was evolved from Crane and probably Voysey. He never went to the extremes of Mackintosh, but possessed a livelier sense of adventure than Voysey, at least the Voysey after 1900.

In his very first article in *The Studio* in 1895 he pleaded already for simplicity

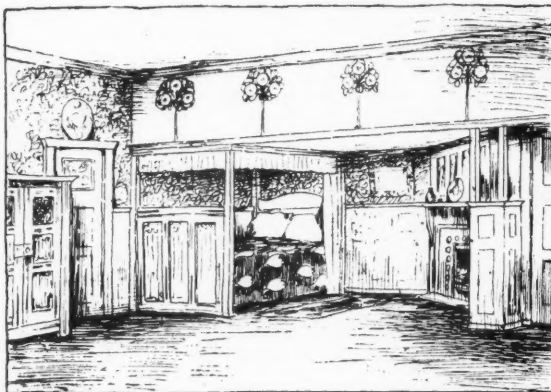
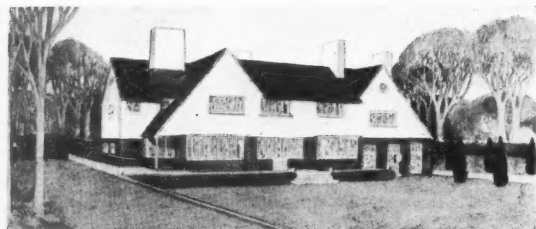


M. H. Baillie Scott: Design for a door; from *The Studio*, V, 1895.



**Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott 1865-1945**

Left top: House at Crowborough, from Academy Architecture, 1902. Left bottom: Chaplain's House, St. Mary's Home, Wantage, from Academy Architecture, 1899.



Right top: Bedroom in an artist's house, from The Studio, IX, 1897. Right bottom: Dining Room Fireplace, from The Studio, VI, 1895.

and against both the "doll-house-like prettiness of the so-called Queen Anne bijou residence," and the "commoner box-of-bricks style of suburban house." That marks his position accurately, with the double opposition against Victorian and Norman Shaw-Newton domestic architecture.

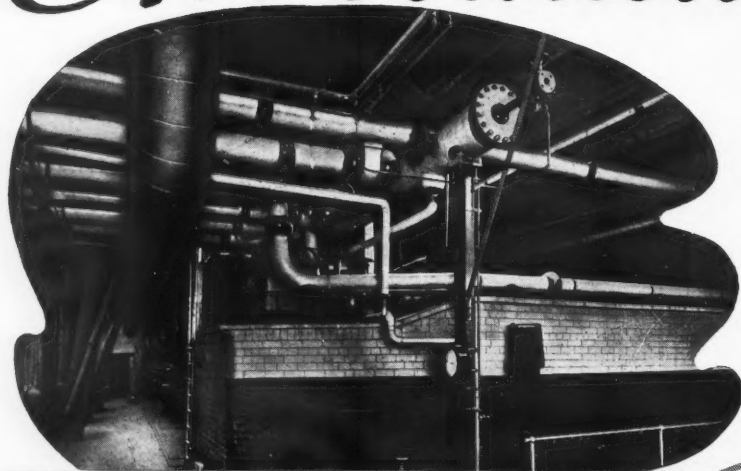
His houses were collected, published in a separate volume in 1906 and again in 1933.

**Coal and Councils**

The Coal Utilization Joint Council (President Mr. Robert Foot) is not a Government department. It is an enterprise of the industries interested in the use of solid fuel. Propaganda for solid fuel is one of its jobs, and they might well have understood it as a straightforward advertising job. However, they have not. They have taken a broader and more enlightened view, and spent several years' efforts on research with improved heating and cooking appliances. The result of these efforts is now presented to the public (and local councils) in the form of an exhibit.

[continued on page lviii]

# Air Conditioning



**VENTILATING**

**HEATING**

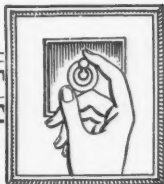
View of a Boiler House comprising Six Lancashire Boilers for servicing a very large Air Conditioning Plant by Cheethams of Oldham. Note Ventilating Duct in the Boiler House.

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*The Electrical Section at the Building Centre, Maddox Street, London, W.1, provides interesting illustrations of electrical applications in domestic and industrial premises.*





## MARGINALIA

continued from page lvij

bition at the Building Centre and a booklet of twenty-four pages. Basing the terms of reference of their work on the admirable fuel chapters of the Government's *Housing Manual* for 1944, they first formulate precisely what improvements are needed.

Space-heaters should be built so that they can be closed for slow burning over long periods at a low rate of combustion. Their sides and backs should be used for convection heating by warmed air, either for the room in which the fire is burning, or for adjacent rooms. Smokeless fuels should be burnable in them, and where ordinary coal is burned, smoke emission should be reduced.

Cookers should be built so that they can be kept burning over long periods, for instance over night, without control. Convection-heated ovens should be provided. Coke, coalite, anthracite, etc., should be usable in them.

The appliances shown at the exhibition and in the booklet comply with these requirements. They are made by a group of foundries in which most of the leading names in the industry are to be found. They are tolerably well, and some very well, designed, as far as appearance goes. Their savings or running costs are carefully calculated, and do not seem exaggerated.

Purchasing costs on the other hand are still, it seems, on the high side, and there is the very real danger in this that short-sighted local councils may refuse to order them, because they don't

mind the tenants' expense as long as they themselves can equip their houses cheaply.

The tragedy of it is that none of these appliances will come down to a really low price unless large orders are given, and large orders depend to a considerable extent on municipal enterprise.

On the other hand, it remains open to doubt whether the least costly designs and methods of construction have already been found. The Coal Utilization Council has done immensely valuable work in carrying research forward to the advanced point it has now reached. Might not now the stimulus of competition amongst members carry on? We have seen a similar case in the aircraft industry: strictly controlled minimum performance, but otherwise freedom of design and individual improvement. Of course, here again it must be admitted that during the war big orders were the certain reward of the enterprising manufacturer. Will they come to the designer of heaters and cookers? Local councils have a great responsibility.

Everyone knows the absurd waste of coal and money that is going on from day to day in our heating. The American answer is central heating. This was studied by the Ministry of Fuel and Power's recent special mission sent out by the Minister, and due now to report to him. It is doubtful whether the American answer will be ours for quite a long time. Meanwhile what can we do as long as people of all classes insist on their open fires? The work of the Coal Utilization Council gives us a

satisfactory answer, and we have every reason to be grateful to it.

There is only one query, perhaps not a fair one, considering the composition of the Council. Are not for certain purposes, for instance the supply of hot water at any time of day, gas and electricity obviously the better media? Would not in actual fact a combination of solid fuel, gas and electricity always be more reasonable than a hundred per cent. concentration on one of them? This incidentally is one of the many things which the Housing Manual shows; and which no doubt the work of the new Fuel and Power Advisory Council to the Ministry (under the chairmanship of Sir Ernest Simon) will further elucidate.

### Your Home

This is the title of a small exhibition arranged by Heal's, of Tottenham Court Road, to introduce their customers and potential customers to current problems of building. The selection is intelligent, the display indifferent. But as the material on show is sufficiently attractive, and some of it sufficiently unusual too, one is prepared to do without the enjoyable tricks of exhibition technique to which we all have become addicted. The first panels are of actual building tools of the past, an adze, a jointing plane, a router, a draw-knife, a turning lathe, and so on. Then there is a panel on brick-making and brick-laying, followed by one on present-day laboratory research with new materials and methods. Actual methods are shown

in three articles, one for Mr. Yorke's Braithwaite system (with the designs for a private house specially designed for the exhibition), one for Unity, and one for Orlit. Sheets illustrating Mr. Gibberd's Northolt houses, Mr. Sheppard's Jicwood house and the TVA prefabricated house are lying about on tables. In addition the excellent model layouts of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning—seen by too few at the Ministry—are included, and some screens with photographs and drawings from Switzerland, France (from the recent R.I.B.A. Exhibition) and Sweden.

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Session commences 18th September, 1945.  
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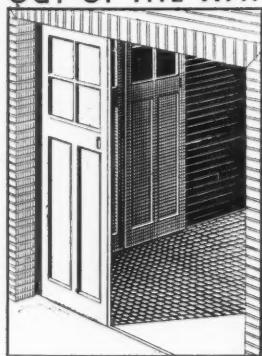
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